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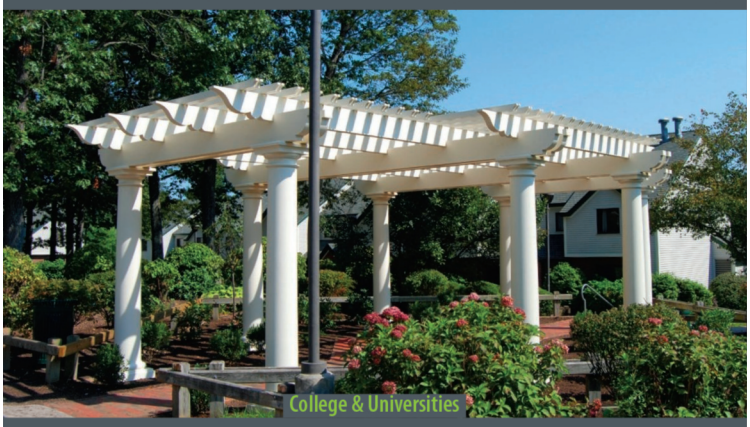
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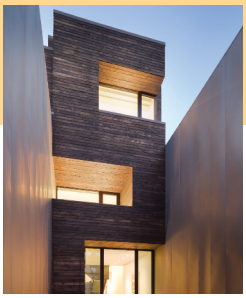
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ONE SINGLE THING

Bradley W. Johnson

What if I told you there was something we could do—a single particular thing—that would reduce building costs in DC, making DC a more affordable place to live, while also helping small businesses in all parts of the city? That would get your attention, wouldn't it?

That one thing would be to reduce the time it takes in DC to get a building permit.

I know—it sounds like a real snoozefest of an issue to be writing about on this page. But it's an important pocketbook issue not only for developers, but for any homeowner who is thinking of renovating a house or condominium. Time is money, and when it takes too long to get a permit—as it often does here in DC—it leads to cost increases that we all end up paying for in one way or another.

Right now, it takes months to get a permit in DC, even for the simplest of jobs. Given the carrying costs of building projects, reducing the time it takes to get a permit would save developers and homeowners a lot of money. And it would help city coffers as well—the city doesn't start to gain tax revenue from a project until it goes on the tax rolls, so the sooner that happens, the sooner city officials can begin seeing those revenues.

Welcome!

Imagine if the millions of dollars currently spent on carrying costs for building projects that wait six months, 12 months, and even as much as two years for permit approval could instead be devoted to other things, such as affordable housing, better sidewalks, or improved service delivery throughout the city. We would all be better off.

The people who issue building permits are doing their best, but they are overworked and under stress. They need help, including increased staffing. The city sometimes awards large tax abatements to certain individual projects on the grounds that those projects will help spur economic development. The cost effectiveness of those abatements is sometimes open to debate. But for a fraction of the cost of just one of those abatements, the city could hire additional people into the building permit office to help reduce average permit approval times.

Over the last year, AIA|DC has been working quietly to make a few changes to improve the permit approval process. More significant change, however, can come only when we realize that the current delays in the process are not just an inconvenience, but an active source of harm to the city's economic development.

Frequent readers of this magazine will know that the end of the year brings our annual awards issue, which combines the winners of the AIA|DC *Washingtonian* magazine spring residential design competition and AIA|DC's fall design competition. What's different this year is that the fall competition was judged by a single jury, instead of a separate three-person jury for each award category. This was particularly exciting—and exhausting—for the jurors, as they were with us for two days, conducting the most careful review of our work that I have seen in the 18 years I've been with the chapter. It was an amazing process to watch. We extend our deep thanks to those jurors, whose names appear at right.

We hope you enjoy reading about the winning projects, which were either done by DC-area architects, or built in our area (in most cases, both). The projects have great variety, although it might be noted…ahem…that they all required building permits of one kind or another. DC architects, like the city in which they practice, are becoming more recognized and sought after. Imagine how much more they could accomplish if we fixed the currently unwieldy building permit process and made DC a model city in that regard.

Happy Holidays to you all. And as always, we love to hear from you, so please send us your comments.

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Ronald O'Rourke ("Un-Suburbia") is a regular contributor to *ARCHITECTUREDC*. His father, Jack O'Rourke, was an architect in San Francisco for more than four decades.

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  Ann Beha Architects, Boston, MA
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  Ross Barney Architects, Chicago, IL
- Clive Wilkinson, FAIA,
  Clive Wilkinson Architects, Culver City, CA
- Kulapat Yantrasast,
  wHY Architects, Culver City, CA

Washingtonian Residential Design Awards

- Merrill Elam, FAIA,
  Mack Scogin Merrill Elam Architects, Atlanta, GA
- Peter Rose, FAIA,
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Ontario Residence as seen from the street.

Photo © Paul Warchol

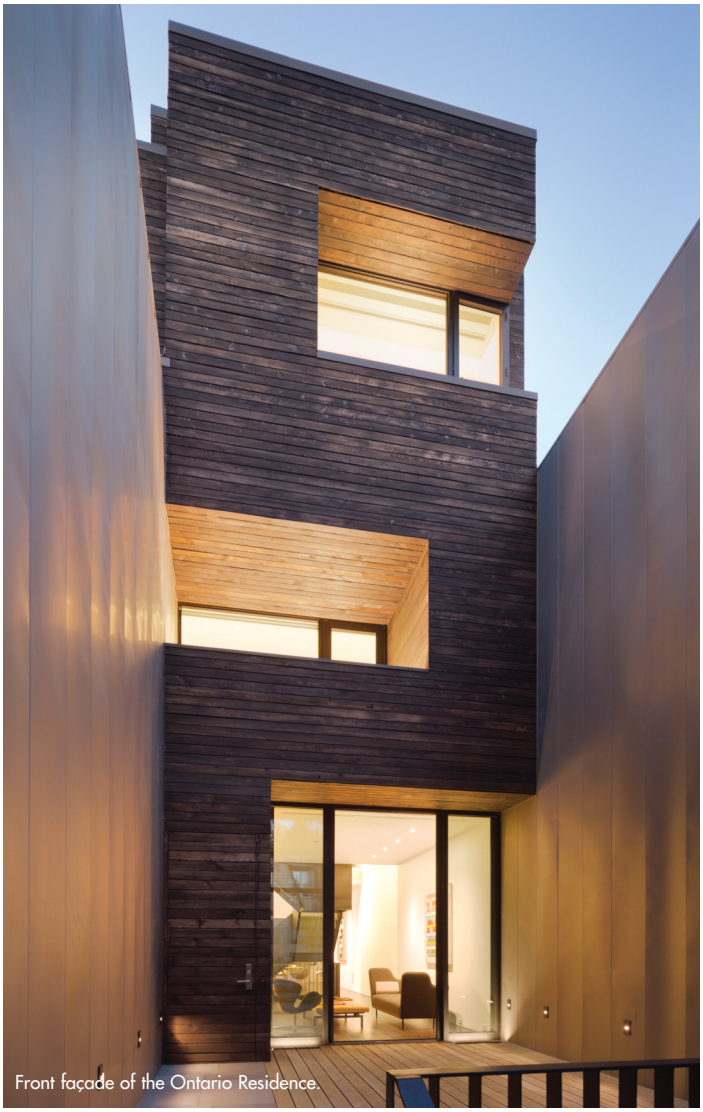
Front façade of the Ontario Residence.

Photo © Paul Warchol

City Living

Good Design Makes Good Neighbors

by Denise Liebowitz

City homes have to get along with the neighbors. Unlike country houses or suburban residences set on roomy properties, city homes have the extra challenge of respecting the surrounding community, not annoying the neighborhood, and acknowledging they are only one piece in the larger urban fabric. Whether redesigning an apartment in an occupied building with an industrial-era aesthetic or constructing a new house in a historic district, architects and their clients must shape their dreams to fit the existing context. For some, it is that very context that inspires the most beautiful and creative design—at least it is for these award winners.

Washingtonian Award

Ontario Residence

Washington, DC

David Jameson Architect, Inc.

Lighting Designers: DKT Lighting and Design
Structural Engineers: Linton Engineering, LLC
MEP Engineers: Foley Mechanical, Inc.
General Contractor: PureForm Builders, Inc.

David Jameson, FAIA, a Modernist architect with a portfolio demonstrating his ease in negotiating Washington's historic urban fabric, has inserted into an established Adams Morgan street a new row house that asserts its design integrity while respecting the neighbors.

Staircase of the Ontario Residence.

Photo © Paul Warchol

During the city's building boom in the late 19th century, developers often constructed sweeps of row houses along city blocks, sometimes leaving an empty lot between the end of their development and the beginning of the houses of a competing developer. The Ontario Place Residence is built on one such empty lot, for years used as a 14-foot-wide community garden plot. "Every row house is challenged by a lack of natural light and exterior living space," said the architect. "We wanted to rethink these paradigms and acknowledge the previous green void that had been here before."

He began by veiling the brick walls of the two adjacent buildings with metal-clad walls in a soft pewter hue. Then, he set the new house well back from the street and erected steel mesh panels along the street front to create an entry courtyard. These panels align with the adjacent houses and maintain the existing building line. The screen structure also serves as the support for a vertical garden, both providing privacy to the courtyard and giving back to the community some of the organic green space that previously defined the lot.

Although the residence is five stories tall, from the street the central massing reads as only three levels. A glassy, basement-level studio is tucked below the main entry, much as in a traditional row house. The main living level is topped by two bedroom levels and a family room above those. A roof deck offers views toward the National Zoo. The main volume of the house is clad in charred cypress siding. At the rear of the house and barely visible from the street is a taller stucco structure that serves as the building core, housing kitchen and baths. Here, across the alley from a five-story apartment building, the height of the stucco element, in the words of the architect, serves as a "scale moderator."

Jameson explained that the metal-clad walls lining the property act as light baffles, pulling natural light deep into the house. In the interior, a dramatic perforated-steel stair climbs up from the main level to the floor above, the airy shaft drenching the interior in more light. The staircase's perforated treads and risers suspended from the solid steel frame extend the design premise of the house: the play between heavy and light, solid and porous. The same counterbalancing is seen with the exterior metal walls and steel mesh screens.

When asked about the challenges encountered in introducing contemporary design into traditional city neighborhoods, Jameson said, "we're fortunate to attract clients who want us to create idea-level projects. One person may hate it and four may love it; architecture is supposed to elicit a response."

Washingtonian Award

Salt and Pepper House

Washington, DC

KUBE Architecture

Landscape Architects: Campion Hruby Landscape Architects
Structural Engineers: JZ Structural Consulting
Steel Fabricators: Metal Specialties

Behind its business-as-usual street facade, this Capitol Hill row house was stripped to its studs to make way for a light-filled, airy interior that opens to a rear garden as contemporary and spare as the spaces inside. The award-winning design is the result of a creative collaboration between **Janet Bloomberg, AIA,** founder and principal of **KUBE Architecture,** and the homeowners, an older couple who were actually married in the house while it was under construction. The design-savvy clients with a big social life wanted a home where they could entertain both large and small gatherings, that was environmentally sensitive, and where they could comfortably age in place.

The house is organized around a central core of service spaces— including an elevator—which allows free circulation around the entire main level, ensuring that big parties don't turn into a crush. The rear portion of the second floor was eliminated to create a double-height living/

View of the living/dining area and patio of the Salt and Pepper House.

View toward the kitchen and upstairs study of the Salt and Pepper House.

Photo © Greg Powers Photography

Photo © Greg Powers Photography

dining space opening to the garden. With new steel structure in place, the design team was able insert a full rear wall of glass that encourages seamless indoor-outdoor dining.

Upstairs is a luxurious master suite with a forward-thinking, universally accessible bath. The suite connects to a sleeping nook, perfect for visiting grandchildren, according to the architect. The remaining space on the second level is a loft dramatically overlooking the living space and garden, with glass railings whose steel framing connects to the structural elements of the first level.

The garden, a collaboration between KUBE and Campion Hruby Landscape Architects, is a serene refuge with a handsome, deliberately oxidized COR-TEN steel fountain and white-washed brick walls and ceramic paving that take their cues from the materials used on the interior.

The project was previously covered at length in the Summer 2016 issue of ARCHITECTUREDC.

Main living area of the renovated Water Street Flat 2.

Kitchen of the Water Street Flat 2.

Photo © Anice Hoachlander/Hoachlander Davis Photography

Photo © Anice Hoachlander/Hoachlander Davis Photography

Washingtonian Award

Water Street Flat 2

Washington, DC

Richard Williams Architects

Structural Engineers: Tadjer-Cohen-Edelson Associates
MEP Engineers: CSCE, Inc.
General Contractor: Glass Construction

This 4,000-square-foot apartment enjoys jaw-dropping views over the Georgetown waterfront, up and down the Potomac River, Key Bridge, the Kennedy Center, and Roosevelt Island. But while it had plenty of space, it was oddly configured, almost turning its back on one of the best vistas in the city.

"We designed several units in this building as it was coming out of the ground in the early 2000s, including this one," explained **Richard Williams, FAIA.** Williams' original design for this apartment had to accommodate five bedrooms for the first owner's large family. "The master bedroom had the downstream view and was located where the living room wanted to be; there were lots of constraints with the five-bedroom program," recalled the architect.

View of the Potomac River from the Water Street Flat 2.

Photo © Anice Hoachlander/Hoachlander Davis Photography

When that original owner was preparing to sell, he asked Williams to draw up a layout for the space that would take better advantage of the view as a way to appeal to prospective buyers. A young couple already living in the building made an unsolicited offer and Williams' new design conveyed with the sale.

Williams and his team totally reoriented the space to its magnificent views with just two big design moves: reducing the five bedrooms to three and relocating the kitchen. Previously, the sightline from the apartment entry to the water was blocked by a wall; the living room, sized more like a den, enjoyed only a narrow slice of the big vista; and the kitchen and its workaday clutter were on full display. By eliminating what had been the master bedroom, the design team was able to enlarge the living room to benefit from the extended run of floor-to-ceiling windows looking to the river. To solve the entry's walking-into-a-wall problem, the architects tucked the kitchen just around the corner from where it had been, making space for a formal dining room and opening an unimpeded view from the entry to the water.

In the kitchen, the architects were able to reuse the original cabinets as well as the appliances, adding only a new luxurious sweep of Carrara marble across the counters, waterfalling down the casework, and up the backsplash. Now, arrival into the apartment is met with a dramatic vista across the serene dining room and out to the river. To give some sense of intimacy to the dining space, fixed, translucent polycarbonate panels screen a portion of it and a lowered, curved ceiling floats over the dining table. "The screen has the quality of ground glass that captures and transmits light in interesting ways and pulls it into the entry," said Williams.

"We carefully edited all the finishing details," he added, "such as eliminating the running trim base board. I was thinking of it as an industrial building one might find in an old New England mill town. We tried to find that aesthetic here in a design that is not fussy, just very restrained."

Jade Residence.

Interior of the Jade Residence,
with yellow-painted area below a skylight.

Photo © Pepper Watkins

Washingtonian Award

Jade Residence

North Wildwood, NJ

EL Studio

Structural Engineers: ANH Structures, LLC
Surveyors: Stephen C. Martinelli Surveying, LLC
General Contractor: EL Studio

Think cars with fins, beehive hairdos, and Chubby Checker. New Jersey was a hot spot of doo-wop culture in the 1950s and early '60s and nothing better reflects that optimistic period of American history than the flamboyant motel architecture of Wildwood. You know doo-wop commercial design when you see it: vivid color palettes, kitschy ornamentation, space-age curves, off-kilter angles.

Photo © Pepper Watkins

It's exuberant and funky—and most of us used to hate it until lately we've learned to embrace it.

One architect, **Mark Lawrence, AIA,** principal and co-founder of **EL Studio,** didn't just embrace doo-wop design, he lived it. In the 1970s, Lawrence's parents, both public school teachers, bought a motel close to the beach in Wildwood as a seasonal business. From the age of four, he spent his summers at the family's Jade East Motel in Wildwood's doo-wop district. As the name suggests, the motel was loaded with colorful green, and Lawrence remembers it ornamented with exotic Buddha statues.

While his parents have now finished their teaching careers, they still own and operate the motel and wanted a retirement and vacation home that accommodates the family business and makes space for the next generation.

Using an available lot on the motel property, Lawrence designed a three-story, 3,000-square-foot building that includes

Kitchen of the Jade Residence.

Photo © Pepper Watkins

Jade Residence, with adjacent motel visible in the background. Photo © Pepper Watkins

two ground-floor rental units that replicate the original motel, topped by a two-level family residence. Picking up on the jade green theme, he organized the structure around a color-saturated core of kitchen and baths. A double-height living room connects the main level that includes the kitchen, living/dining area, two bedrooms and two baths to the third-story guest level that offers two more bedrooms and a bath.

Large windows and terraces open to views of the ocean and motel pool and two dramatic light monitors, which are painted vibrant yellow like a doo-wop neon sign, pull diffused natural light into the interior. Windows are placed at varying heights, "so dogs and children of all sizes get customized views," according to Lawrence.

To stay within budget and accommodate his parents' taste, the architect kept interior finishes basic: red oak flooring whitewashed for a beachy feel, a little bit of maple trim, standard tile, and quartz kitchen counters.

"My dad was a science teacher," said Lawrence, "and really got into the sustainability aspects of the house." The southerly orientation of roof pop-ups maximizes solar gain on collectors; a geo-thermal system, excellent cross-ventilation, and customized window units with hurricane-resistant rain screens all help make the building extremely efficient.

Talking about architects designing for their parents, Lawrence said, "this kind of thing can go wrong in so many ways," but in his family's case he's happy to report, "they love it."

Housing in Augusta, Georgia.

Porches of the Augusta, Georgia, housing project.

Photo © Suzane Reatig Architecture

Photo © Suzane Reatig Architecture

Merit Award for Urban Design/Master Planning

Augusta Housing

Augusta, GA

Suzane Reatig Architecture

Structural Engineers: MGV Engineers
MEP Engineers: Spencer Bristol Engineering
Civil Engineers: Johnson, Laschober & Associates, PC
General Contractor: Renaissance-BCI General Contractors

How is it that an Israeli immigrant, trained in the Modernist, Bauhaus tradition in Haifa, is the go-to architect of an apostolic, evangelical African-American church whose previous design aesthetic was heavy on gilded domes and carved lions' heads? The unlikely partnership of **Suzane Reatig, FAIA,** and the Universal House of Prayer for All People is the kind of "only in America" story that transforms individuals and communities.

One of Reatig's early commissions in Washington was for a Christian LGBTQ church in then-crime-riven Shaw. Her success with that project brought her another church client, the United House of Prayer, a large national church headquartered in DC. In purchasing lots throughout Shaw for both affordable and market-rate housing, the House of Prayer has become a major landlord in the area and helped fuel the resurgence of this newly vibrant neighborhood. The church and Reatig, the loyal client and its trusted architect, have collaborated on nearly 20 projects in Shaw over the past couple of decades, all displaying her spare, confident design.

Now in another unexpected departure, Reatig and her client have shifted their focus from inner-city modern to rural southern vernacular in an affordable residential project in Augusta, Georgia. Bailey Village is a newly completed pocket community straddling a major road linking Augusta's historic downtown to its colleges and golf courses. In a previously dilapidated and neglected part of the city, there is now a 20-unit development of single-family homes and duplex apartments in a total of nine, two-story buildings. Each home contains two bedrooms, one and a half baths, and approximately 1,450 square feet in an open floor plan. Front porches provide shaded outdoor living space in Georgia's sweltering summers.

Reatig drew inspiration from the few remaining old shotgun houses in the area with their wood siding, gabled roofs, one-room-behind-the-other configuration, high ceilings, and no hallways—a layout that ensures plenty of cross-ventilation and natural light. On the exterior, slight variations in window combinations, porch and entry configurations, and building setbacks create the feeling of a diverse streetscape. The bright color palette sets each unit apart and pays homage to the vitality of this once-thriving community.

When asked about the notable divergence between her Modernist buildings in Shaw and her wood-framed shotguns in Augusta, Reatig balked. "In the most important ways they are not different," she asserted. "Simple room layouts, cross ventilation, light, and air are always what we start with. How can we make the best outcome for any specific situation; how can we make people's lives better—these are always the first questions we ask for all of our work."

"She hit a home run," said Apostle Sterling Green, the clearly satisfied United House of Prayer client who reported that there is only one Bailey Village vacancy at the moment. "The homes are within walking distance of the local universities and with so few good housing options in the area, we have attracted a very racially diverse community here. Good architecture drives integrated housing."

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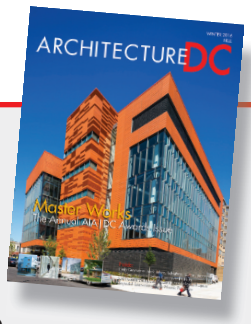

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McInturff Architects| Photo © Julia Heine

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Street façade of the Singh Hoysted house and studio.

Photo © Julia Heine/ McInturff Architects

Un-Suburbia

Six Houses Offer New Ideas for 21st-Century Lives

by Ronald O'Rourke

Ask someone to conjure an image of suburbia, and he or she might picture an endless stretch of look-alike ranch-style houses, or quarter-acre lots crowded by ostentatious McMansions. While there's some truth to such images, they're oversimplifications, especially now that suburban areas are starting to reengineer themselves to adapt to new living and working patterns, a changing mix of household types, and renewed competition from fashionable downtown neighborhoods.

The six suburban houses profiled here—a group that accounts for more than half of the winners in this year's AIA | DC Washingtonian Residential Design Awards competition—provide some indications of where this reengineering is headed. Evenly divided between new houses and renovations, the projects include a live-work residence, several sharply modern designs, and a house that incorporates modern elements into a traditional design framework.

Washingtonian Award

Singh Hoysted Live/Work

Takoma Park, MD

McInturff Architects

Structural Engineers: Neubauer Consulting Engineers
General Contractor: Added Dimensions

Many suburban developments separate residential areas from commercial areas, devoting some parts of the landscape to bedroom communities and others to office parks and other employment centers. That seemed to make sense when commuting to work each day was standard practice and the home was regarded as a refuge from work. But with people increasingly telecommuting or

Singh Hoysted studio space.

Photo © Julia Heine/ McInturff Architects

otherwise working at home, combined live/work residences will be in demand, which will make the suburbs more like traditional city centers (where living above the shop is an arrangement that dates back centuries) and rural areas (where the homestead has long served as both living quarters and a base for agricultural and other economic activities).

Located in a close-in suburban neighborhood of Bethesda, the Singh Hoysted Live/Work house by **McInturff Architects** is an infill project that includes a spacious studio for an artist who works in mixed media. "We were excited by the idea of a house and studio overlapping so that each part reveals itself to the other in multiple ways, interlocking home and work," said **Mark McInturff, FAIA,** the firm's founding principal.

The house "is conceived of as a block, with one quadrant carved out to create a courtyard, resulting in an L-shaped plan," said **Colleen Healey,** a principal at the firm who was the project architect working with Mark McInturff.

The house's exterior employs a white, blue, and black color scheme that stands out crisply against its leafy green suburban setting. "The parts of the house that conform to the block are white and have simply placed openings," McInturff said. "The L-shaped courtyard walls are black shingles, with irregularly placed openings, as if to suggest that the creativity of the work in the studio is bursting out of the rationality of the house."

The studio is set level with the courtyard, giving it a high ceiling, while the adjacent kitchen and dining and living areas are set a few steps higher, giving them a more conventional ceiling height. The master suite and two other bedrooms are on the second floor. "Joining the live/work function is a stair rising through the house in half levels, with openings, large and small, that frame vistas as one moves between house and studio," Healey said.

Most of the house's principal interior spaces overlook or open onto the courtyard. Rather than reusing the bright blue that appears on the exterior, the color scheme for the interior living spaces employs gentler accent hues that complement the blond wood flooring, promoting the feeling of an easy-going lifestyle in a park-like setting.

"Like the rest of the house, where work and life are combined, the courtyard is part house and part outdoor work space, allowing for dinner parties among the works in progress," Healey said. Similar to the mixed-media works in the studio, the house can be viewed as a collage-like work of art amidst nature.

Washingtonian Award

Distilled Traditional

Bethesda, MD

Anne Decker Architects

Interior Designer: Linda S. Mann Interiors
Specialty Finishes: Lenore Winters Studio
Landscape Architects: Lila Fendrick Landscape Architects
Structural Engineers: Linton Engineering, LLC
Civil Engineers: CAS Engineering
General Contractors: Potomac Valley Builders, LLC

As architects work to reengineer established suburban areas, they may encounter an existing architectural context that includes a variety of architectural styles. In navigating such situations, architects might need to address questions such as: What is the place of traditional design in a 21st-century suburb? And what does it mean today, in a suburban setting, to be modern?

In the Edgemoor part of Bethesda is one architect's nuanced response to such questions. The project, dubbed "Distilled Traditional," is a new house by **Anne Decker Architects** that infuses modern design features into a traditionally styled residence, producing a home that slips elegantly into its surrounding context.

"Edgemoor was established in the early 1920s, and contains a diversity of architectural styles, from original Colonial homes to sprawling contemporary mansions," said **Anne Decker, AIA,** principal at the firm. "The siting of this particular house was established to blend in to the existing fabric of the neighborhood without calling attention to itself."

Entry hall of the "Distilled Traditional" house, with Great Room visible through the arch at left.

Photo © Tom Arban Photography

"Distilled Traditional" house.
Photo © Tom Arban Photography

Kitchen of the "Distilled Traditional" house. **Photo © Tom Arban Photography**

With simple gables and plain white stucco exterior walls, the house presents a rather modest face to the neighborhood, bringing to mind a residence that one might encounter in a village in Normandy. Behind the restrained façade, however, is a generously sized house that subtly incorporates modern design touches into its traditional design motif.

"While acknowledging the strong architectural history of Edgemoor, this house takes traditional forms and interjects modern twists, creating a home that feels warm and familiar but clean and crisp at the same time," Decker said.

Visitors encounter an entry hall with a graceful stairway leading to the second floor—a feature that, as in classical houses of the past, serves as an initial object of admiration. Passing under the stair through a paneled arch opening, guests arrive at a centrally located great room with partly exposed ceiling beams suggestive of a historic country mansion.

The great room leads in one direction to the dining room and kitchen, and in another to a library. Additional first-floor spaces include a home office off the entry hall and a mudroom linking the garage to the kitchen. The house transitions to the outdoors with a fireplace terrace off the kitchen and a separate dining terrace and fountain garden off the great room. The second floor includes a capacious master suite and a second bedroom and bath.

The exterior's mostly white color scheme is carried through to the interior. On both the outside and inside, white surfaces are punctuated with an edited combination of other materials. "Stucco, limestone, and copper speak to traditional ways of building, while large steel and glass windows and doors bring a fresh angle," Decker said. "The oak floors and the hardware give warmth to the interior, while blackened window and door openings dissolve in the white walls, blurring the boundary between interior and exterior."

Each part of the house "was designed and distilled down to its fundamental essence creating a purity of space and form," Decker said. "By removing what is unnecessary, the house becomes all about proportion, texture, and light."

Washingtonian Award

Difficult Run Residence

McLean, VA

Robert M. Gurney, FAIA, Architect

Landscape Architects: Lila Fendrick Landscape Architects
Structural Engineers: D. Anthony Beale LLC
General Contractors: Peterson & Collins Inc.; Commonwealth Building and Design

Reengineering the suburbs also involves renovating existing houses, sometimes quite substantially, to meet the needs of households that depart from the traditional suburban model of mom, dad, and two and a half kids. A case in point is the Difficult Run Residence, a 1960s-era house with George Jetson-like angular roofs that was recently renovated by **Robert M. Gurney, FAIA,** for an empty-nester couple periodically visited by their children and grandchildren.

"The house is sited on a steeply sloping and wooded lot bordering a stream and parkland trail," Gurney said. As originally built, the house "contained a series of interior and exterior spaces below a single, low-pitched roof with a ridgeline spanning diagonally above the orthogonally arranged spaces. An attached hexagonal volume contained the bedrooms. The space was wrapped in a muted palette of materials, rendering existing interior spaces compartmentalized and dark, despite expanses of glass."

The project fully renovated and expanded the existing house, added a new detached garage and guest house, and a reorganized the surrounding grounds. The existing house had five bedrooms; the newly renovated property has eight, including six in the main house and two in the new garage/guest house.

In the main house, the renovation stripped interior finishes, removed walls to open up the interior, replaced hexagonal spaces with rectangular ones, and enlarged windows. In addition to bedrooms, the project added bathrooms, a library, a media room, an exercise room, a laundry room, and other support spaces. The added rooms, Gurney said, "are stacked vertically—but they descend rather than ascend, working within the steeply sloping topography and minimizing the apparent size of the new structure."

The house's sloping roof structure was retained, but the ballast roofing was replaced with standing-seam, coated stainless steel. The existing siding was replaced with a combination of slate, stucco, and limestone. New interior finishes include cream-colored stone, dark-stained oak flooring, smoked oak, wenge, walnut, and lacquered millwork, and black granite. The detailing "is crisp and minimal, with no trim, casing, or baseboards," Gurney said—a trademark feature of his work.

The grounds surrounding the main house and the new garage/guest house were substantially renovated, with improvements including a new parking area and tree-lined approach, a swimming pool with an infinity edge, a reflecting pool, and terraces and decks.

The goal of the project, Gurney said, "was to incorporate all of [the project's] requirements in a cohesive manner, so as to create integrated interior and exterior spaces that are sensitive to the site." The result is a house that retains some of its '60s-era energy while providing comfortable, light-filled living spaces, expansive views to the outside, and a well-organized scheme of gracious exterior spaces.

Entry court of the Difficult Run Residence.

Photo © Maxwell MacKenzie Architectural Photography

Living area of the Difficult Run Residence.

Photo © Maxwell MacKenzie Architectural Photography

Rear of the Difficult Run Residence.

Photo © Maxwell MacKenzie Architectural Photography

Rear of the renovated House in Kenwood.

Photo © Anice Hoachlander/Hoachlander Davis Photography

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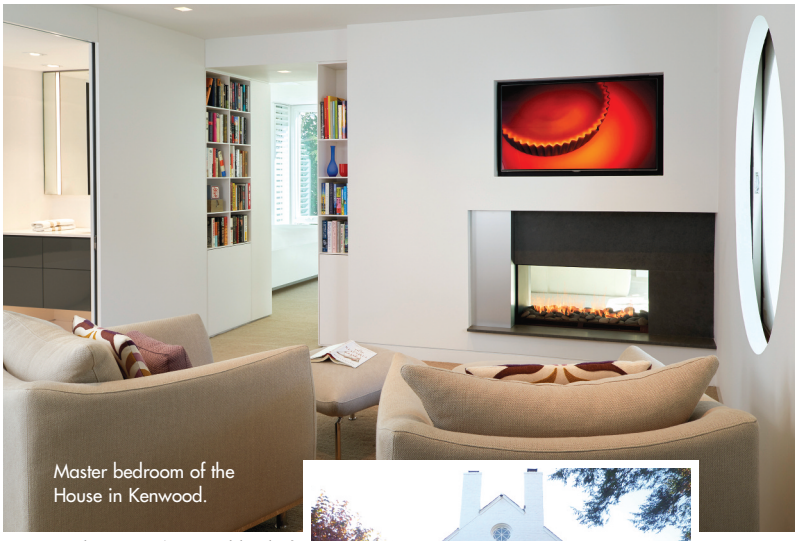

Master bedroom of the House in Kenwood.

Photo © Anice Hoachlander/ Hoachlander Davis Photography

Rear of the House in Kenwood before renovation.

Photo courtesy of McInturff Architects

Washingtonian Award

House in Kenwood

Kenwood, MD

McInturff Architects

Interior Designers: Holt & Harreld
Structural Engineers: 1200 Architectural Engineers
General Contractor: Alliance Builders

Many existing suburban homes are built to designs that are blandly inoffensive, or worse. But the suburbs also have some architecturally noteworthy houses, including one in the Kenwood part of Bethesda that was renovated in the late 1970s by Hugh Newell Jacobsen, FAIA, the man widely regarded as the dean of Washington-area Modernist residential architects.

Designing further renovations to such a house can pose a complex challenge for an architect: the new design must meet the client's needs and bring the structure up to current standards while at the same time respecting and enhancing the previous architect's work. To meet that challenge for the House in Kenwood, the clients could hardly have made a better choice than **McInturff Architects,** whose founding principal, **Mark McInturff, FAIA,** is often regarded as the first member of the follow-on generation of Jacobsen-influenced Washington-area architects.

At the House in Kenwood, "the timeless quality of Jacobsen's work has held up well, but the master bedroom suite had not been an important part of the original work and the new owners approached us to update that part of the house," McInturff said.

In the new plan, "the original bedroom has been left as a sitting area within a now-enlarged suite," said **Colleen Healey,** who led McInturff's team for the project. "The bedroom proper was moved to a small addition above a rebuilt ground floor porch, allowing for higher ceilings and larger windows. The baths and closets were gutted and reconfigured to create a spa-like ambiance."

As renovated, "the detailing, proportions and quality of light pay respect to the Jacobsen aesthetic," McInturff said. "Fittings, lighting, and hardware were updated to current standards and technology, but otherwise the difference between the new and old is seamless, and undertaken with great restraint and respect."

The project was previously covered at length in the Summer 2016 issue of ARCHITECTUREDC.

Washingtonian Award

Mohican Hills House

Bethesda, MD

Robert M. Gurney, FAIA, Architect

Interior Designer: Therese Baron Gurney, ASID
Landscape Architects: Campion Hruby Landscape Architects
Structural Engineers: D. Anthony Beale LLC
General Contractor: Commonwealth Building and Design

View toward a second floor porch of the Mohican Hills Residence with the master bedroom at right.

Photo © Anice Hoachlander/Hoachlander Davis Photography

In the Mohican Hills part of Glen Echo, Maryland, was an oddly shaped, sloping lot with some distant views of the Potomac river and a surrounding architectural context featuring a high percentage of contemporary and mid-century modern homes. Responding to those conditions and the clients' program, **Robert M. Gurney, FAIA,** designed the Mohican Hills House, a new residence with a mostly linear footprint.

Rear view of the Mohican Hills Residence.

Photo © Anice Hoachlander/Hoachlander Davis Photography

"The house is positioned along the site's ridge and oriented toward the river views," Gurney said. "The linear composition provided a large lawn with minimal site intrusion, and preserved the vast majority of mature trees on the site."

Some houses in wooded areas seek to blend into their surroundings, while others aim to stand out in contrast to it. Mohican Hills House, clad in a fairly neutral combination of wood and gray stucco—but with an energetic arrangement of building volumes and window openings— is somewhere in between. The wood siding—a thermally treated form of poplar called Cambia wood—is applied in horizontal strips, emphasizing the house's long and low proportions.

The first floor includes the residence's public spaces and a small home office, while the second floor includes the master suite, three other bedrooms, and a small sitting area overlooking the double-height living room. "The house is organized around a two-story living space with an open floor plan that integrates a high-ceilinged volume with intimate spaces adjacent to the double height space," Gurney explained. "A three-story entry volume separates the master bedroom area from the subsidiary bedrooms."

Large expanses of glass provide views into the wooded landscape and toward the river while admitting sunlight into the house at all times of day throughout the year. Particularly in the evening, with interior lights on, the house when viewed from the outside becomes a study in solids and voids.

A dark-stained concrete slab on the first floor soaks up the sun's warmth, reducing heating costs. Other interior materials include maple flooring on the second floor, maple, walnut, and ebony cabinetry, and simple glass railings. The interior's restrained color scheme and spare detailing create a clean backdrop for brightly colored furniture pieces and the colors of nature viewable through the windows.

The house's lawn creates a highly structured ground plane for the property, reinforcing the distinction between the house's rectangular and mostly horizontal geometry and the less-orderly canopy of tall trees wrapped around it. Considered as a whole, the house achieves a balance between hiding on its site and calling itself out, as well as a pleasant tension between the straight lines of human-built things and the not-so-straight lines of nature.

Washingtonian Award

House on Poplar Avenue

Takoma Park, MD

McInturff Architects

Structural Engineers: Neubauer Consulting Engineers
General Contractor: Added Dimensions

Rear of the House on Poplar Avenue.

Photo © Julia Heine/ McInturff Architects

Finishing where things started, with a project by **McInturff Architects,** we come to the House on Poplar Avenue, in Takoma Park. Like the Mohican Hills House, it is situated on a sloping, wooded site.

"The project converted a tiny, mid-century modern house into a small modern one," said **Mark McInturff, FAIA.** "What had been a one-story box on a walk-out basement is now a two-story modern box on a walkout lower level." That's a bit of an understatement, as the existing house was an oddly squat and somewhat drab-looking structure that could have been mistaken for a service building, while the newly renovated house stands proudly upright and projects an air of controlled jauntiness.

The renovation used the house's existing footings and foundations and added a second floor. "On the exterior, a simple black metal form is elaborated with a series of colored attachments," said **Colleen Healey.** The black siding gives the house a gravitas that

Living area of the House on Poplar Avenue.

Photo © Julia Heine/ McInturff Architects

goes beyond its compact size, while the brightly-hued attachments provide a focused application of color, particularly on the house's uphill side, where a group of small windows are encased in a rectangular frame filled with bright color blocks, creating something like an abstract painting on the house's exterior—a resemblance that is no accident.

"The colors are inspired by Richard Diebenkorn's Ocean Park paintings," McInturff said, referring to a famous series of 145 paintings created by the abstract expressionist artist between 1967 and 1988.

The deck leading to the entry is pierced by a mature tree and held up by yellow, V-shaped steel struts that suggest a railroad trestle or a waiter supporting a serving tray on spread-out fingertips. The struts add to the exterior color palette and show off a load-bearing structure—a feature found in many of McInturff's houses, and one that calls to mind the exposed-structure designs of British architect Richard Rogers.

With the addition of the second floor, "the three small, original bedrooms were moved up and out of the main level, freeing up much-needed space for a reconfigured, generous open plan for living, dining, and kitchen spaces," said Healey. The result is a house where "a simple exterior shape now gives way to an interior of surprising richness and complexity."

The interior is defined by mostly white walls and blond-wood flooring, accented by darker metal windows and fixtures. The

House on Poplar Avenue before renovation.

Photo © Julia Heine/ McInturff Architects

open-riser stairway, crafted from simple metal bars, brings the focus on structure inside the house while helping to maintain the interior's sense of openness. And it hardly needs saying that the result of these features is a light-filled residence.

The House on Poplar Avenue is not too different in size from the suburban houses of yesteryear. But in terms of its design, it is a long way from the traditional rambler. Along with the other projects covered here, it's a signpost—an indication of how architects are working to transform neighborhoods beyond the city limit into something more than your father's suburbia.

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Rural Retreats

Three Projects Meld Architecture and the Environment

by Holly Feldman-Wiencek

The Barn at Hazel River Cabin.

Photo © Anice Hoachlander/Hoachlander Davis Photography

The three projects featured in this article are set in gorgeous natural environments with spectacular views, yet take unconventional approaches to the design of a rural retreat. Each thoughtfully celebrates and complements its surroundings while yielding a distinct work of architecture.

Washingtonian Award

The Barn at Hazel River Cabin

Woodville, VA

Bonstra | Haresign Architects

Interior Designers: Bonstra | Haresign Architects
Lighting Designers: D.Gilmore Lighting Design
Landscape Architect: Teri Speight, Master Gardener
Woodworkers: J.C. Woodworking
General Contractors: Timberbuilt Construction

Weathered siding, a shingled roof, and a sturdy utilitarian structure give the impression that the Barn at Hazel River Cabin has witnessed many seasons of the forest and river that embrace it. In fact, however, the barn is not original to the property. It is constructed of a repurposed hand-hewn oak corncrib from Pennsylvania, dating to the 1840s, that the client found online.

Sitting in an intimate clearing, the barn serves as a screened living space, equipment shed, and future pool house for a historic log cabin on the property. Architect **David Haresign, FAIA,** and his team at **Bonstra | Haresign Architects** sensitively assimilated the relocated structure into its new environment. The reclaimed vertical wood siding that covers most of the exterior provides a counterpoint to the horizontal logs of the main cabin nearby. By peeling back the siding at one corner of the barn, Haresign and his team revealed glimpses of the corncrib's original frame while creating a narrow porch lined with French doors that admit light to the interior. The porch provides a vantage point to enjoy the scenery year round—bare trees in winter reveal a view of the surrounding

Interior of the Barn at Hazel River Cabin.

Photo © Anice Hoachlander/Hoachlander Davis Photography

Blue Ridge Mountains—and will eventually serve as the link to the pool deck. Painted cypress wraps the original wood frame where it is exposed to the elements, adding a clearly modern touch to the exterior.

Inside, the design takes a playful approach to blending old and new, natural and manmade. Notably, the antique, rough-hewn beams of the corncrib are revealed and showcased, evoking the log cabin that the barn serves. Rough hemlock siding hung horizontally recalls the orientation of the corncrib's original siding and complements the antique frame. Otherwise, only minimal additions adorn the space. Furniture and appliances in bright colors accentuate the difference between new and old while evoking the colors in the wood frame and surrounding environment. It is easy to imagine seeing the purples, oranges, and yellows mimicked in the surrounding trees in autumn.

The richness of colors, textures, and ideas captured in such a small space yields a serene yet visually rich retreat.

Vanity in the Barn at Hazel River Cabin.

Photo © Anice Hoachlander/Hoachlander Davis Photography

Fletcher's Mill.

Photo © Richard Williams Architects

Excellence in Architecture

Fletcher's Mill

Sperryville, VA

Richard Williams Architects

Landscape Architects: Gregg Bleam Landscape Architect, PLC
Structural Engineers: 1200 Architectural Engineers
General Contractor: Abrahamse & Company Builders

When a retiring couple approached **Richard Williams Architects** about building a new full-time residence to begin the next chapter of their lives, they did so with a clear sense of purpose. They wished to create a space that would be comfortable and intimate enough for two, but also welcoming to large gatherings of future grandchildren and friends.

Fletcher's Mill captures and makes physical this sense of purpose. The design integrates the natural environment into the home, rooting it in the landscape, yet also creates a prospect from which to enjoy the constantly evolving scenery. Principal **Richard Williams, FAIA,** notes that this is the result of many strategic decisions made by him and his team, particularly project architect **Justin Donovan, AIA.**

One of those decisions was to site the home on a knoll at the top of a gently sloping meadow that leads to a river below. Williams and his team worked with the existing topography to nestle the house into the slope, eliminating the need to over-engineer the land. Wanting to create a connection to the natural environment the clients love so dearly, the team first chose the location for the screened porch and designed the layout around it. The connection to the landscape is echoed throughout the design. Large windows in the living room bring both the meadow view and natural light inside, and windows at either end of the house frame two peaks that stand opposite each other, reminding residents of their place in the Blue Ridge Mountains.

The emphasis on place is evident in the materials chosen. Native blue stone, brick, copper, and concrete recall the materials and colors found throughout the local environment and local vernacular architecture. The large fireplace evokes a farmhouse hearth and the window mullions—not usually seen in minimalist homes—add a sense of tradition and coziness.

But what is most lovely about the home is, as Williams puts it, its "spatial alchemy." The home feels both intimate and airy, assertive and gentle, restrained and welcoming.

This project was previously covered in the Winter 2015 issue of ARCHITECTUREDC.

Living area of Fletcher's Mill.

Photo © Tom Arban

View through the living area of Fletcher's Mill toward the landscape.

Photo © Tom Arban

Interior of the
Woodside Residence.

Exterior of the Woodside Residence.

Photo © Bruce Damonte Photography

Photo © Bruce Damonte Photography

Photo © Bruce Damonte Photography

Merit Award in Architecture

Woodside Residence

Woodside, CA

David Jameson Architect, Inc.

Structural Engineers: Severud Associates
MEP Engineers: ACIES Engineering
Civil Engineers: Lea & Braze Engineering, Inc.
Geotechnical Engineers: Romig Engineers, Inc.
Arborists: HortScience, Inc.
General Contractor: Wilkinson Construction

Standing within a grove of statuesque oak trees overlooking San Francisco Bay, Stanford University, and the Santa Cruz Mountains—and only a half-mile from the San Andreas Fault—the Woodside Residence embodies the tension between the beauty of its surroundings and the precariousness of its location. This dynamically composed structure, built to withstand earthquakes, was "conceived to amplify the natural and experiential forces at work on the site and beyond," according to architect **David Jameson, FAIA**. The home accepts and expresses these tensions, juxtaposing materials, spaces, and ideas.

Mimicking tectonic plates below the Earth's surface, the design uses a variety of levels and planes that appear monumental and relatively straightforward from the outside, while yielding complex volumes inside. Wood cartridges are inserted within a raw concrete frame, creating a sense of movement, which alludes to the fissures and undulations earthquakes can produce, reminding occupants of the region's geological fragility. Balancing that potentially sobering awareness are the many glass walls that showcase the beauty of the site. From inside, the windows frame views, while from the outside, the glass beautifully reflects the sky and the trees, softening the home's assertive presence in its surroundings.

The limited palette of materials—concrete, wood, steel, and glass—further highlights the tension between the manmade and the natural, the refined and the raw. Amusingly, it is the concrete—typically an icon of the industrial and manmade—that takes on a raw, natural feel and the wood—typically used as a natural accent—that feels more refined and hand-crafted. Yet the two work together well, both complementing and contrasting the colors in the surrounding environment.

Significant commitments to sustainability were made throughout the house, including the use of the concrete frame both to protect the house from wildfires and to act as solar shading and a thermal-mass heating system; a louver-and-fan system that eliminates the need for air-conditioning; and a solar array that feeds recycled electric car batteries that power the house. These strategies not only further connect the house to its surroundings, but also acknowledge the house's effects on the environment.

Jessica Marcotte Photography

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Main reception area of the Covington law office.

Photo © Prakash Patel

Merit Award in Interior Architecture

Covington

Washington, DC

LSM

Structural Engineers: Thornton Tomasetti
MEP Engineers: Dewberry
Lighting Consultants: FMS
Audiovisual Consultants: CMS
Audiovisual/IT/Acoustical Consultants: Cerami & Associates
Art Consultants: Lisa Austin & Associates
Food Service Consultants: Jacobs Doland Beer
Sustainability Consultants: Sustainable Building Partners, LLC
Code/Life Safety Consultants: Arup
General Contractor: Structure Tone

When the law firm of Covington & Burling leased space at 1201 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, in 1981, it was a harbinger of the long-downtrodden corridor's renaissance. The firm relished its location on "the nation's Main Street" for more than three decades, eventually expanding to nearby buildings. By 2012, however, Covington was looking to consolidate its space, and signed on as the anchor tenant in the pair of office buildings at the western end of the new CityCenterDC development. This time, the firm's choice of location heralded the continuing rejuvenation of the city's "old downtown" between Metro Center and Judiciary Square.

Covington is a large firm employing more than 500 attorneys plus support staff. It occupies the entirety of CityCenterDC's northern office tower and about 70 percent of the southern tower, not including ground-floor retail space in both structures. The base buildings were designed by the British firm of Foster + Partners, while the interiors were designed by Washington's own **LSM,** which has an extensive portfolio of prominent law offices in DC and elsewhere. Because Covington committed to the lease in the pre-construction phase, Foster and LSM were able to work together to customize the base buildings for their principal tenant.

Many of the project's bespoke features serve not only to facilitate interaction among Covington employees, but also to enhance

Café at Covington. Note the diagonal light strips in the ceiling, inspired by the Washington street pattern and visible from outside the building.

Photo © Prakash Patel

An informal meeting area adjacent to one of the bridges linking the two office towers. Photo © Prakash Patel

North office tower of CityCenterDC, with Covington's main reception area visible at lower center.

Photo © Prakash Patel

visual connections between interior spaces and the surrounding cityscape. Covington's main reception area, for instance, which occupies a large space at the base of the north tower, is enlivened by custom artworks including a parade of colorful plexiglass fins by Carlos Cruz-Diez, a nonagenarian Venezuelan artist known for eye-catching pieces. These fins help to mediate between the cool elegance of the often-empty lobby and the relative vibrancy of the adjacent retail establishments lining Palmer Alley, the pedestrian thoroughfare that bisects the CityCenterDC complex. Meanwhile, a series of glassy bridges and projecting atria provide physical and visual links between the two towers while animating the vista of the public walkway below.

LSM's design for the office space reflects the radical changes in legal practices since the dawn of the Internet age. Gone is the central library that once served as the hub of every major law office, replaced by new kinds of gathering spaces, ranging from informal, lounge-like meeting areas to a full-service café to an amply proportioned, multi-purpose conference center. Even the upper floors of the Covington space reflect LSM's interest in establishing a dialogue between interior and exterior: the main office levels, for example, are lined with light coves that lend a uniform glow to the perimeter of the buildings at night, while the café on the tenth floor is marked by a striking pattern of angled lighting strips in the ceiling. That pattern, according to **Rick Bilski, AIA**, a partner at LSM, was inspired by DC's famous street pattern—an idea that resonates when the space is observed from the public park just north of the complex, which is defined by the acute angle of New York Avenue slicing through the grid of lettered and numbered streets. Meanwhile, staff members—even those without private offices along the perimeter—enjoy abundant natural light and clear views to the outside.

Merit Award in Interior Architecture

Bloomberg

Washington, DC

LSM

Structural Engineers: TCE & Associates
MEP Engineers: WSP Group
Lighting Consultants: FMS
Audiovisual/IT/Acoustical Consultants: Cerami & Associates
Fish Tank Consultants: City Aquarium
Broadcast Consultants: Communications Engineering Inc.
IT/Audiovisual/Security Consultants: MAXUS
Food Service Consultants: FDS Design Studio
Sustainability Consultants: Sustainable Building Partners, LLC
Project Managers: Jones Lang LaSalle
General Contractor: Hitt Contracting

Lower-level fish tank and main staircase at Bloomberg.

Photo Jon Miller © Hedrich Blessing

Main staircase at Bloomberg, with the upper-level fish tank at center left.

Studio of the Charlie Rose show at Bloomberg.

Rare is the office interior project that involves a fish tank consultant, but such was the case with the DC office of Bloomberg, designed by **LSM.** Actually, fish tanks are signature features of Bloomberg's offices around the world, but here the architects took the idea and swam with it, yielding two literally fluid sculptural elements that serve as a counterpoint to the machined precision of the interior architecture and furnishings. The tanks, with their limpid water and ever-on-the-move occupants, can also be seen as a metaphor for the Bloomberg operation, which aspires to transparency both physically and philosophically and is often abuzz with the frenetic activity of gathering and reporting information.

Visitors enter not through a formal, staid reception area as is common in many offices, but through a video portal that clearly expresses Bloomberg's mission and output. Just inside the entry portal is the "pantry," which provides a place for collaboration, informal gatherings, or just a work break. Taking advantage of the base building's floor-to-ceiling glass curtain wall, LSM placed open-plan newsrooms adjacent to the exterior. Broadcast studios are nearer to the core, but even they are enclosed by glass partitions to allow plenty of light and views of the surrounding activity.

"Because this is DC, we wanted to have a touch of sophistication and elegance that maybe some of their

Photo Jon Miller © Hedrich Blessing

Photo Jon Miller © Hedrich Blessing

other offices don't have," said LSM partner **Rick Bilski, AIA.** The design team achieved that goal with a generally subdued color palette accented by distinctive and stylish furniture pieces. While most of the notable furniture groupings include icons of the modern era, there is one exception: the heavy, round oak table and matching side chairs in the studio reserved for the Charlie Rose show when it is broadcast from here.

One specific nod to the office's DC location is rather subtle: a band of letters etched into the stone floor running along the perimeter of the space. Anyone who traces the band from beginning to end will have read the full text of the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. Bloomberg has a vested interest, after all, in the amendment's guarantee of freedom of the press.

Retail boutique of Sherber + Rad.

Photo © Paul Warchol

Merit Award in Interior Architecture

Sherber + Rad

Washington, DC

David Jameson Architect, Inc.

Lighting Designers: DKT Lighting and Design
General Contractor: Madden/CCI

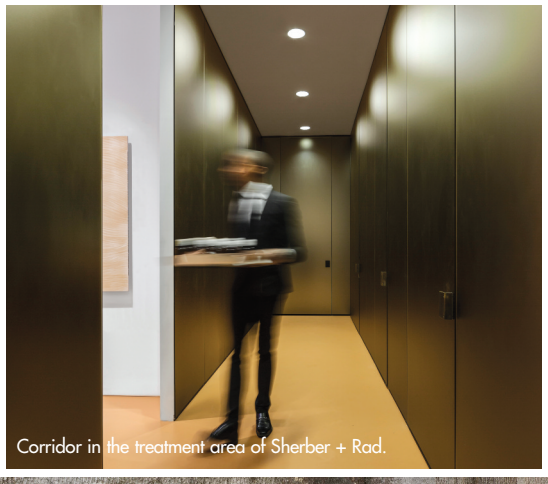
Sherber + Rad, a high-end aesthetic medical clinic and skincare boutique in downtown Washington, is an essay in the possibilities of surface and texture. The street-facing retail area is lined with rough, irregularly patterned panels made from the peeled bark of poplar trees. Shockingly in a space of such elegance, bits of lichen and other debris remain visible on some of the panels. Juxtaposed against this strangely coarse backdrop are various elements that are just as remarkable for their sleekness and smoothness, including bronze-tinted glass shelving, larch wood tables, and a seamless epoxy floor. A luminous ceiling gently bathes the entire space in an even glow.

The genesis of this unusual material palette was counterintuitive. Architect **David Jameson, FAIA,** likened the rough bark paneling to the "before" image of a potential skincare patient's face: richly layered yet inevitably furrowed, beautiful in its way yet imperfect. He took a risk in suggesting this rather stark aesthetic concept to his clients, but after a lunch meeting in which he held up various materials against the bark of an actual tree in the restaurant courtyard, the clients were convinced of Jameson's highly evocative approach.

The medical treatment facilities lie behind the retail boutique, and are directly accessible through an unmarked door off the building lobby, helping to protect patients' anonymity. The caramel-colored epoxy floor (which is germ-resistant) continues in these areas, but the bark-paneled walls do not. Here the walls and doors are sheathed only in either the tinted glass or the larch wood, creating a warmer, more soothing atmosphere.

Despite its urban location and relatively small space, Sherber + Rad feels like a remote, exclusive spa, thanks to its exquisite material selections and thoughtful planning.

This project was featured in the Spring 2016 issue of ARCHITECTUREDC.

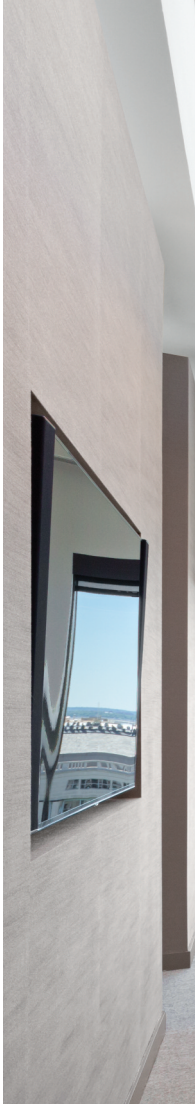


Corridor in the treatment area of Sherber + Rad.

Photo © Paul Warchol

Retail area of Sherber + Rad, with natural bark walls, tinted-glass shelving, larch wood tables, and epoxy floor.

Photo © Paul Warchol



New terrace connecting the two towers of One Franklin Square.

Photo © Bilyana Dimitrova

Merit Award in Interior Architecture

One Franklin Square Building Enhancements

Washington, DC

STUDIOS Architecture

Lighting Designers: MCLA Architectural Lighting Design
Structural Engineers: SKA Consulting Engineers
MEP Engineers: GHT, Limited
Audiovisual Consultants: Cerami & Associates
General Contractor: Rand* Construction

The office building at 1301 K Street, NW, dubbed One Franklin Square by its owners, is affectionately known by many Washingtonians as the "Twin Peaks" building, thanks to its pair of distinctive, pointy towers. At the base of each tower is a lofty interior penthouse space with large windows affording excellent views of the city. Until recently, however, both of those spaces were finished in a utilitarian fashion and were surprisingly underutilized. As part of a recent renovation of all of the building's common spaces, **STUDIOS Architecture** transformed these penthouses into welcome tenant amenities.

Interior of the East Tower penthouse before renovation.

Courtesy of STUDIOS Architecture

Conference center in the East Tower of One Franklin Square.

Photo © Bilyana Dimitrova

The West Tower penthouse now houses an airy, light-filled lounge, while the East Tower accommodates a multi-purpose conference center with state-of-the-art audiovisual capabilities. Both spaces are finished in muted tones, including white and light gray walls, warmed up by touches of wood. In the West Tower, vertical pendant light fixtures emphasize the space's volume, while in the East Tower, horizontal rectangular tubes form an implied ceiling plane just below the clerestory windows, creating a somewhat more intimate environment while ensuring uniform lighting during evening events.

The renovations extended to the rooftop areas adjacent to the penthouses, which were converted into inviting terraces with wood benches, trellises, and vine-covered walls.

This project was featured in the Fall 2016 issue of ARCHITECTURE**DC**.

Tenant lounge in the West Tower of One Franklin Square.

Photo © Bilyana Dimitrova

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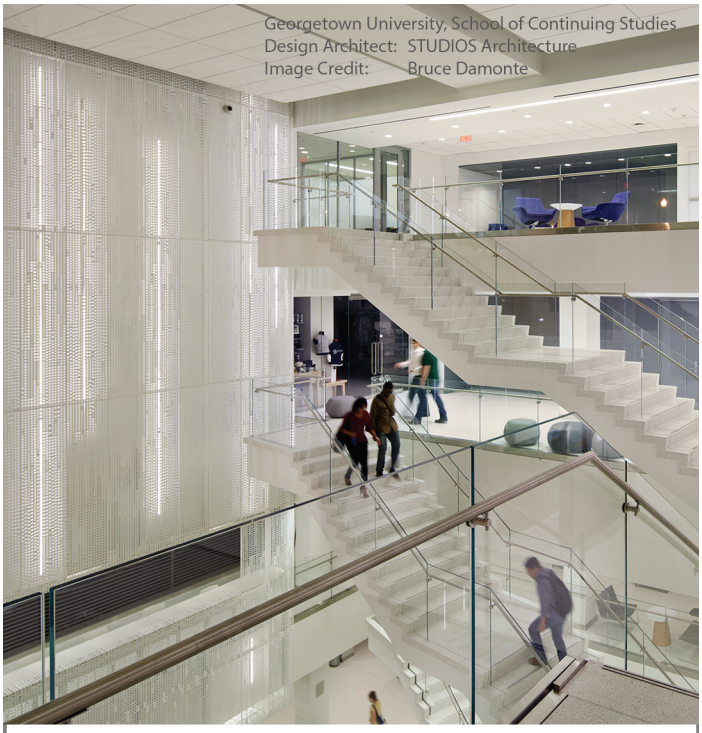

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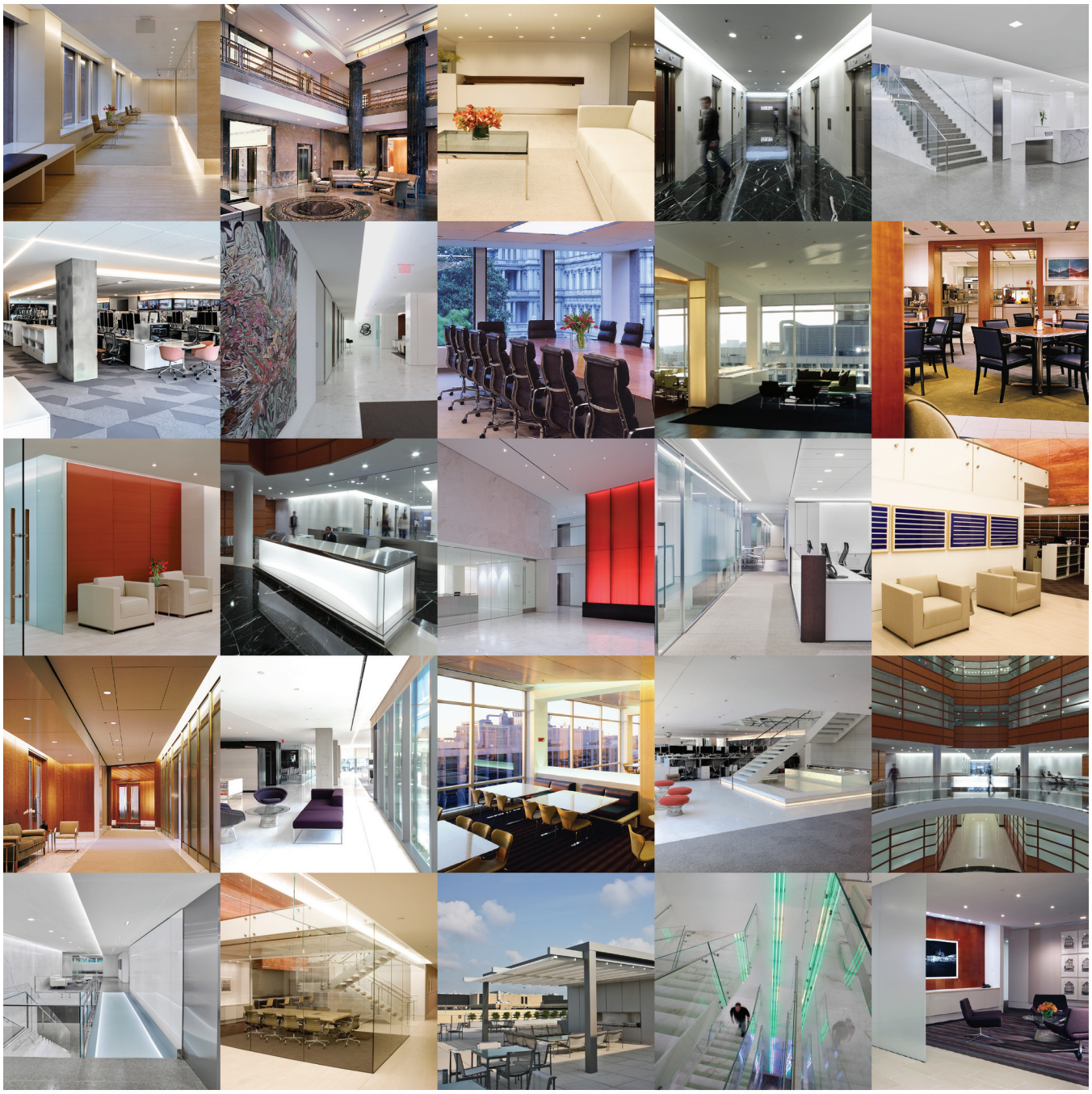

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Howard University

Interdisciplinary Research Building
Washington, DC

Merit in Architecture Award, AIA DC Chapter

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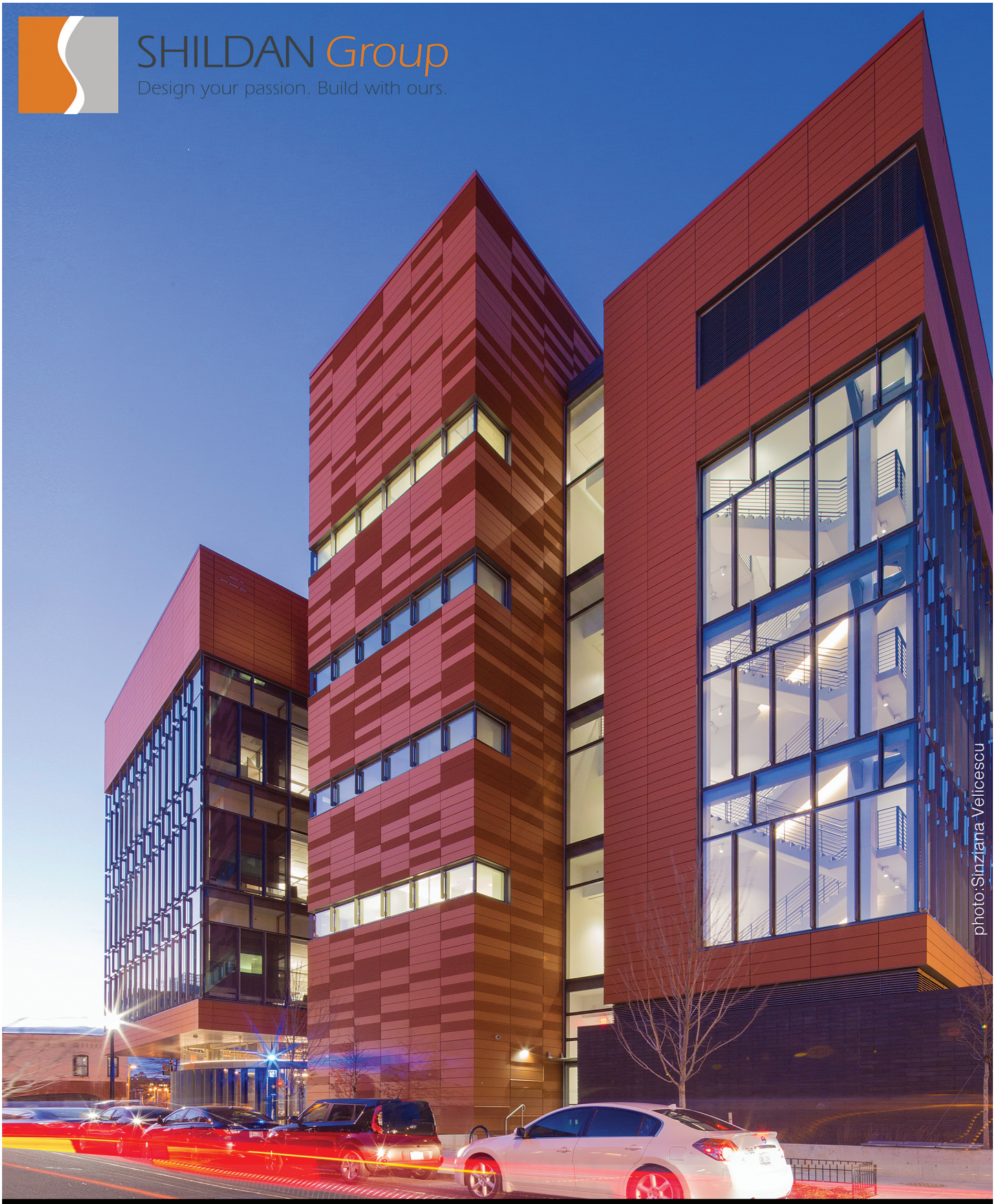


SHILDAN CONGRATULATES HDR ARCHITECTURE ON THE AIA DC MERIT AWARD FOR HOWARD UNIVERSITY IDRC

WE ARE PROUD TO HAVE BEEN A PART OF THIS AWARD WINNING PROJECT!

Mind and Spirit

Bold Forms Distinguish Academic and Religious Projects

by Steven K. Dickens, AIA, LEED AP

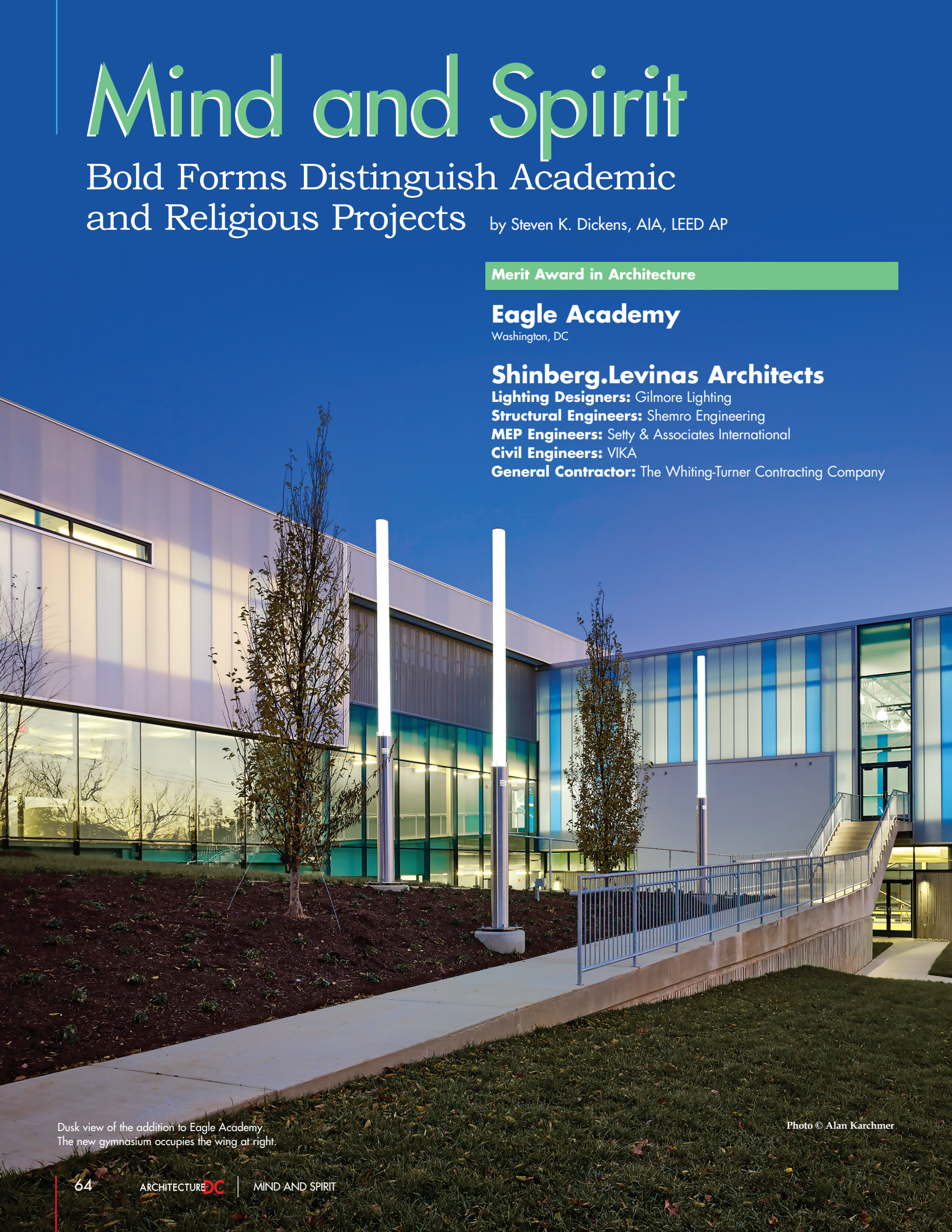
Merit Award in Architecture

Eagle Academy

Washington, DC

Shinberg.Levinas Architects

Lighting Designers: Gilmore Lighting
Structural Engineers: Shemro Engineering
MEP Engineers: Setty & Associates International
Civil Engineers: VIKA
General Contractor: The Whiting-Turner Contracting Company



Dusk view of the addition to Eagle Academy. The new gymnasium occupies the wing at right.

Photo © Alan Karchmer

Addition to Eagle Academy, with a portion of the existing building visible at left.

Photo © Alan Karchmer

Gymnasium at the Eagle Academy.

Photo © Alan Karchmer

DC's extensive experiment with public charter schools continues apace. These upstarts commonly occupy former public schools. More often than not, renovations and additions are needed in such cases to bring the facilities up to current standards.

Charter schools have become a significant portion of **Shinberg.Levinas Architects'** practice. Because the construction budgets are never high, such projects require a "skillfulness to get the most out of the means," as Chapter Awards juror Philip Chen commented. The Eagle Academy PCS at McGogney (the latter being the name of the former public school) exemplifies this skill.

The pre-existing McGogney building was a solid, cleanly composed school of the Modernist era. It received a substantial renovation, including new windows, and now houses classrooms and a multi-purpose room/auditorium. Most other functions, including the new primary entrance lobby, are located in the three-story addition. The addition allows for the sorts of miscellaneous spaces that either were not present in schools of yesteryear, or that nowadays are significantly different in form and function, such as a pool, a gymnasium, a community room, staff offices, a library and reading room, a computer lab, a music room, an exercise room, and locker rooms. "Reinforcing the school's status as a community asset" to its far Southeast DC neighborhood, noted the architects, "the pool and gymnasium can be accessed by the neighbors after school hours."

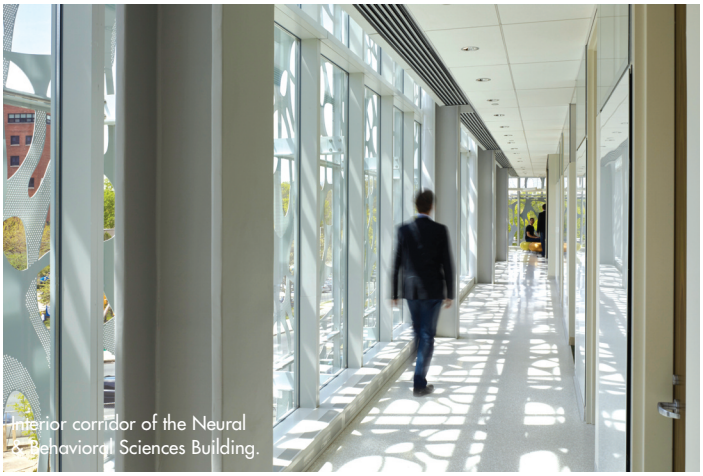
Much of the exterior cladding of the addition is polycarbonate sheets, which at night glow like a lantern. "It's the building equivalent of leaving the porch light on," gushed juror Carol Ross-Barney, FAIA, who added that this neighborly gesture also "sets a tone of progressivity" for the academics within. The gymnasium, with its glowing stripes of blue and milky white panels lining most of the perimeter, is a spectacular space in its own right—never mind any budget constraints.

Juror Wendy Pautz, AIA, commended the "transformative" character of the project, making special note of its series of well-defined outdoor spaces, some of which are semi-public, while others are playgrounds for the school.

This project was previously featured in the Spring 2014 issue of ARCHITECTUREDC.

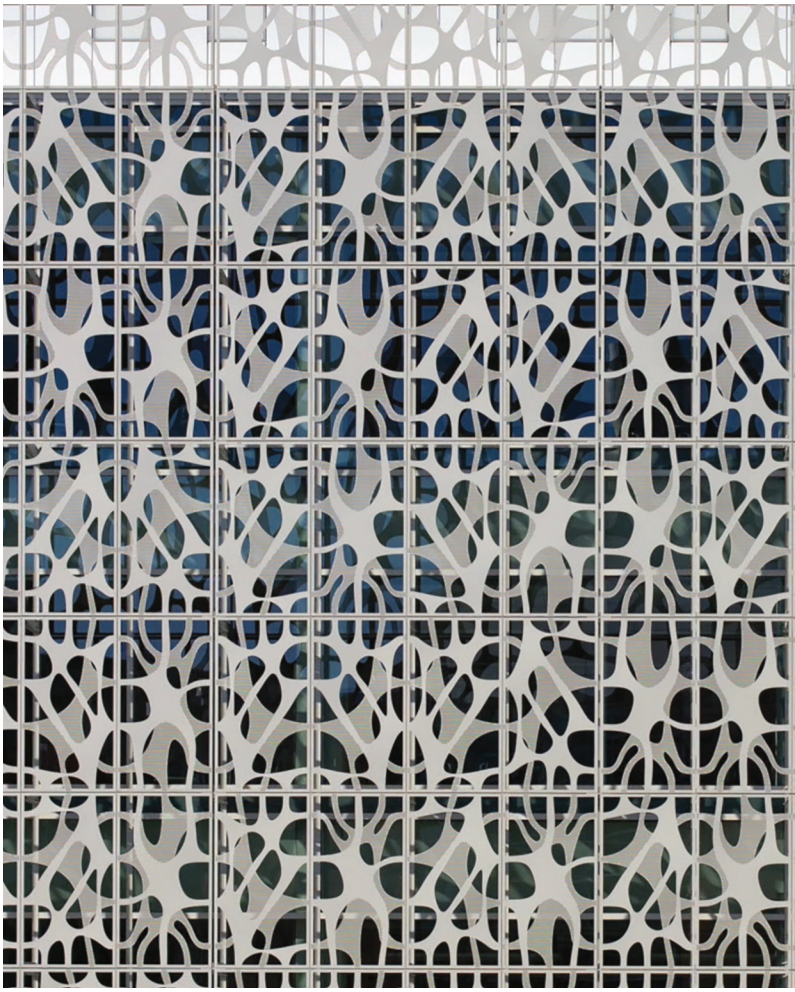
Neural & Behavioral Sciences Building at the University of Pennsylvania.

Photo © Alan Karchmer



Interior corridor of the Neural & Behavioral Sciences Building.

Photo © Alan Karchmer



Detail of the sunscreen of the Neural & Behavioral Sciences Building.

Merit Award in Architecture

Neural and Behavioral Sciences Building, University of Pennsylvania

Philadelphia, PA

SmithGroupJJR

Landscape Architects: Christopher Allen Landscape Architects
Structural Engineers, MEP Engineers, Laboratory Planners, and Lighting Designers: SmithGroupJJR
Civil Engineers: Pennoni Associates, Inc.
General Contractor: P. Agnes, Inc.

"The genesis for the new Neural and Behavioral Sciences (NBS) Building is the acknowledgement that the study of complex behaviors will be a fundamental focus of life sciences in the 21st century," stated **SmithGroupJJR** in the firm's competition entry. The building itself, like its subject, "operates on many different levels and layers," noted juror Wendy Pautz, AIA. It connects the campus and adjacent community; it creates a new quad for life sciences; it provides state-of-the-art facilities; and last but not least, it provides a strong new architectural image for its end of the campus.

Both the purpose of the building and major aspects of its internal organization are evident from the outside. A volume with continuous windows and patinated-copper cladding contains the laboratories, while the offices at the other end are marked by individual windows set in a pattern of white metal panels. The size and character of windows in each case calibrate sensibly with the spaces within. The signature feature is the sunscreen on the south side of the building, which shields a wall of glass. Changing patterns of light and shadow enliven adjacent circulation areas and "interaction gathering spaces"—informal meeting areas intended to foster unexpected encounters among faculty and students.

The sunscreen is composed of a series of two-layer panels. The components come in only two patterns, but they are installed in four configurations which, when mirror-imaged, produce eight variations total. The seemingly abstract motif is drawn fairly directly from graphic representations of neurological activity, an obvious and appropriate reference to the building's purpose. The screen is engineered to substantially reduce solar heat loads while still allowing expansive views outward.

Juror Pautz said that the design is a "very straightforward and simple response to site conditions that leverages them to its advantage." The NBS Building also lends a new, 21st-century face to University Avenue—one with expansive glass to connect the campus and the city, rather than separating the academics from the community in erstwhile "ivory towers." On the opposite end of the building is the major entrance from the campus, facing a botanical garden. Here the upper floors cantilever out, which creates cover—the architects call it the "porch"—while disturbing fewer tree roots. From Hamilton Walk, a major pedestrian axis of Penn's campus, the building peeks out behind the Collegiate Gothic Leidy Hall.

Photo © Alan Karchmer

"Porch" of the Neural & Behavioral Sciences Building.

Photo © Alan Karchmer

Interdisciplinary Research Building at Howard University.

Photo courtesy of HDR Architecture, Inc.; © 2015 Dan Schwalm/HDR

Merit Award in Architecture

Howard University Interdisciplinary Research Building

Washington, DC

HDR Architecture, Inc.

Associated Architects: Lance Bailey & Associates
Landscape Architects: Landscape Architecture Bureau
Structural Engineers: Delon Hampton & Associates
Mechanical/Electrical Engineers: HDR Architecture, Inc.
Mechanical/Plumbing Engineers: Setty & Associates
Civil Engineers: A. Morton Thomas & Associates
Fire and Life Safety Engineers: Protection Engineering Group
LEED Facilitators: Sustainable Design Consulting
Cost Estimators: Talevi & Haesche
EMI/RF Shielding: Vitatech
Fire Protection/Alarm Consultants: GHD
Wind Wake Analysis Consultants: M/E Engineers
Program Managers: Brailsford & Dunlavey
General Contractor: Turner Construction Company

Staircase in the Howard University Interdisciplinary Research Building.

Photo courtesy of HDR Architecture, Inc.; © 2015 Ari Burling

Workspace in the Interdisciplinary Research Building.

Photo courtesy of HDR Architecture, Inc.; © 2015 Ari Burling

Howard University's Interdisciplinary Research Building (IRB), like Penn's NBS building, is at the border of the academic enclave and the adjacent community. The IRB, by **HDR Architecture,** however, is much more urban—right on the sidewalk of busy Georgia Avenue, NW, with W Street running along the south side. The "ground level connects to the urban fabric," said juror Wendy Pautz, AIA, approvingly, referring to the floor-to-ceiling glass along the entire ground floor. This invites views into the lobby, a retail space along Georgia Avenue, and a spectacular round café on the corner. The lobby extends up the entire five stories of the building, visually connecting all areas.

Distinct programmatic elements read clearly in the exterior massing, becoming the central theme of the architectural expression. Above the café is a stack of offices aligned with Georgia Avenue, which at that point is slightly off the north-south grid of the campus. Along W Street, a tall mass houses bathrooms (thus the high windows), and continues much higher than the rest of the building to conceal a profusion of exhausts and elevator shafts. These play off the largest mass, which houses the laboratories.

"It's a clean parti," complimented juror Clive Wilkinson, FAIA, using the architectural term for a compositional idea that marries function and architectural expression. "We liked the strategy of breaking down the masses."

The architects noted that the terra cotta panels of the façade, which extend into the lobby, provide "a connection to the traditional, Georgian-style masonry buildings on campus." Moreover, they have "a ribbed texture, which mimics traditional African textiles and art, associating the building with Howard's heritage as an African American university." Although these associations might be largely subconscious, the color and scale of the panels are not subtle. They lend a boldness to the building that is a welcome addition to Howard's somewhat reserved campus. The IRB is part of Howard's Academic Renewal Program, which aims to spur development at the southern end of the campus. It does so much more, though. Its architecture sends an unmistakable message that modern and exciting things are happening within.

Howard University Interdisciplinary Research Building, as seen from Georgia Avenue.

Photo courtesy of HDR Architecture, Inc.; © 2015 Dan Schwalm/HDR

Merit Award in Architecture

Snyder Sanctuary

Boca Raton, FL

Newman Architects

Lighting Designer: Ron Eichorn, AIA
Landscape Architects: A. Grant Thornbrough & Associates
Structural Engineers: Reliance Engineering
MEP Engineers: Johnson, Levinson, Ragan, Davila, Inc.
Civil Engineers: Thomas Engineering Group, LLC
Acoustical Consultants: Acentech
General Contractor: Gerrits Construction

Lynn University, in Boca Raton, Florida, was founded in 1962 as Marymount College, a women's Catholic institution, but in the years since has transitioned to a private, co-ed, non-religiously-affiliated college, notable for having the highest percentage of foreign students (24%) of any university in the southeastern US. Its campus is suburban, with some seven lakes and the lush subtropical landscaping one would expect in South Florida.

From its name, one might think that the "Sanctuary" is intended as one of those collegiate "safe spaces" which have been the subject of some political ridicule lately. But it is really somewhere between a jewel-like multipurpose space and a non-denominational chapel.

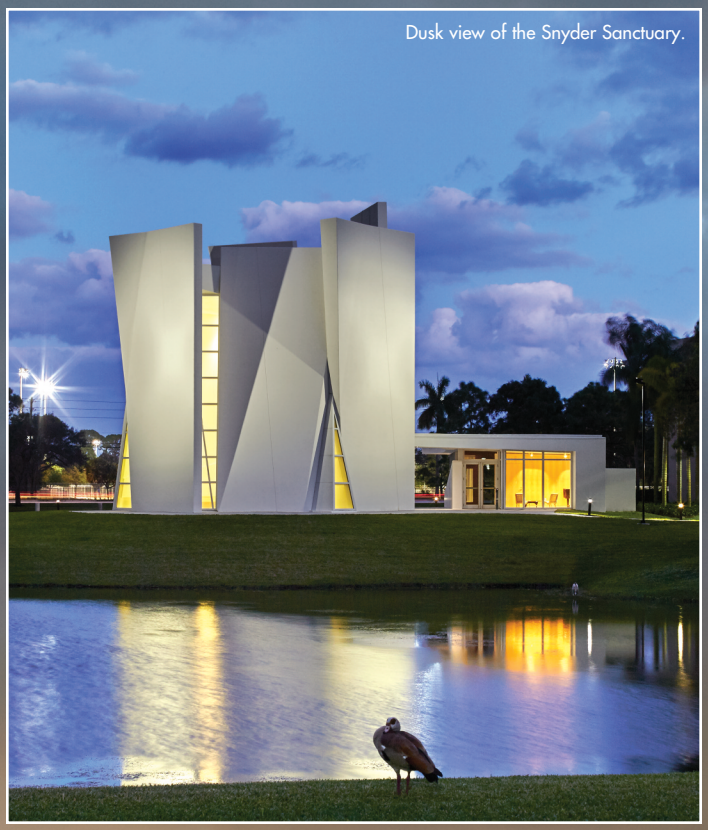
According to the architects, the project grew from an interest to "move beyond religion's potentially divisive social impact by creating a special place for [students] to find common ground through sharing exploration of their spirituality outside of traditional religion."

The form of the main space is created by seven solid concrete panels tilted together at different angles, forming a loose spiral, with glass in the triangular void spaces. Each panel depends on the others for structural stability—a direct and intentional metaphor for the human condition. The building is located in a park-like setting between two lakes just off the main campus pedestrian walkway. It proclaims itself, according to juror Carol Ross-Barney, FAIA, as the "intellectual and spiritual heart of the campus."

The space is deliberately non-hierarchical and lacks any religion-specific iconography, yet it clearly reads as a spiritual space. It is easy to imagine how yoga classes, musical performances, and site-specific art events would be ennobled by such a space, enhancing the spiritual side of such activities. In addition, the space houses liturgical services of different faiths, using portable elements and symbols.

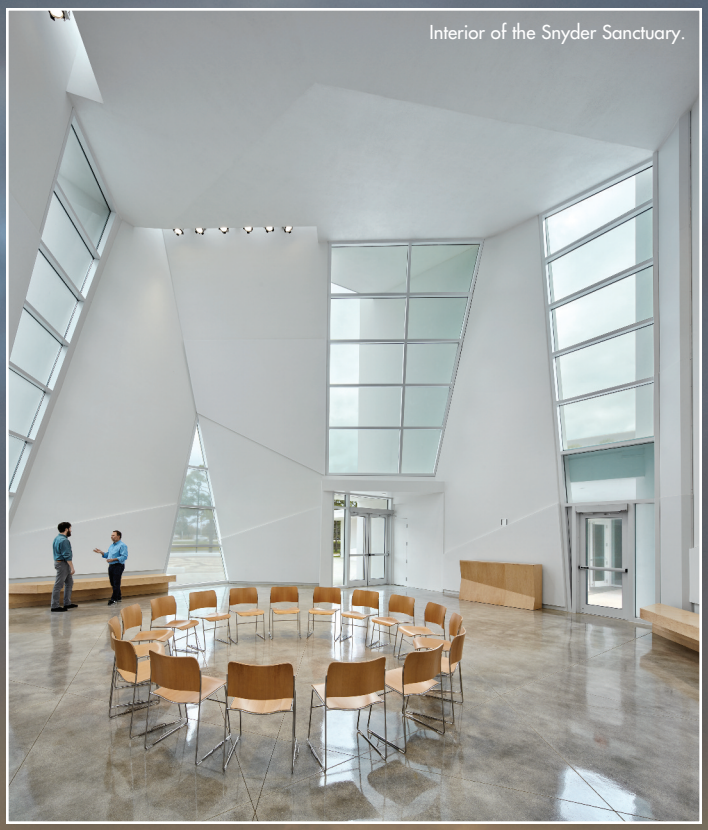
In the firm's competition entry, **Newman Architects** stated that the goal was "to create a space that evokes wonder through universal themes." The jury unanimously felt that this goal was attained—through manipulation of light, shadow, solid, void, and movement, which is ultimately the foundation of all architecture.

Snyder Sanctuary at Lynn University.



Dusk view of the Snyder Sanctuary.

Photo © Robert Benson



Interior of the Snyder Sanctuary.

Photo © Robert Benson

Photo © Robert Benson

Award for Excellence in Architecture

King Abdullah Petroleum Studies and Research Center Community Mosque

Award for Excellence in Urban Design/Master Planning

King Abdullah Petroleum Studies and Research Center Master Plan

Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

Hellmuth, Obata & Kassabaum, PC (HOK)

Programmers, Master Planners, Landscape Architects, Interior Designers, Graphic Designers: Hellmuth, Obata & Kassabaum, PC (HOK)
Lighting Designers: George Sexton Associates
Structural Engineers: Walter P. Moore & Associates
MEP Engineers: Syska Hennessy Group
Civil Engineers: Greenhorn & O'Mara
Curtainwall Consultants: Curtainwall Design Consulting
General Contractor: SK E&C

Community Mosque at the King Abdullah Petroleum Studies and Research Center (KAPSARC).

The King Abdullah Petroleum Studies & Research Center (KAPSARC) master plan by **Hellmuth, Obata & Kassabaum** (HOK) rose to the top of the awards competition for many reasons, said the jurors, but key among them was that it is mostly constructed and therefore its sustainability goals are measureable and its architectural success judgeable.

The project consists of a brand-new gated community, mostly residential but with a small town center of shops, offices, and recreation facilities. The architecture of the buildings is chic and modern, in some cases with elements drawn or abstracted from traditional Arab architecture. It "manages to achieve a spatial enrichment, [which is] difficult to do when starting from scratch," commented juror Clive Wilkinson, FAIA. But the real story is in the planning and the sustainability measures.

The site is a perfect rectangle of 474 acres of desert, located between Riyadh and its King Khalid International Airport. A *wadi,* or riverbed that is dry almost all the time, snakes through the center. It became the organizing central element of a warped grid of streets, which loosely follows the topography and optimizes directional winds for cooling. Communal elements, most notably the spectacular mosque but also the central plaza, are located along the *wadi,* with residential areas to the sides. Most of the *wadi* is used for landscaped parkland, which makes sense given that it is naturally (slightly) wetter than surrounding areas.

Sustainable elements are widespread and carry the message that, although the Saudis' wealth may come from fossil fuels, they are looking toward a renewable-energy future. It is appropriate for sustainability measures to vary from site to site to climate to climate, and KAPSARC sensibly addresses its desert setting. It takes advantage of the intense sunlight, and it makes special efforts at responsible use of water resources. The community includes a 5.8-megawatt photovoltaic panel array that meets 35% of the demand for electricity. There are also rooftop solar water heater panels. Some 75% of the spaces receive enough natural light that electric lighting is unnecessary during the daytime. Potential glare is dealt with via louvers and screens, both of which are prominent in vernacular Arabian architecture. Energy efficiency is achieved via high-performance mechanical systems, well-insulated thermal envelopes, and low-energy lighting and equipment.

For those unfamiliar with the multi-pronged enterprise that LEED has become, KAPSARC provides a good primer. All the villas are certified at the LEED for Homes (LEED-Homes) Gold level,

Photo © Alan Karchmer

Community Mosque, showing the layered façade. Photo © Alan Karchmer

Plaza in the KAPSARC complex. Photo © Alan Karchmer

and the multi-family and community amenity buildings are certified at the LEED for New Construction (LEED-NC) Platinum level. It is targeted to be the first LEED for Neighborhood Design (LEED-ND) project in the Middle East.

This being Saudi Arabia, the centerpiece of the KAPSARC development is naturally a mosque. But much as the gated community is no ordinary town, architects HOK made sure that this is no ordinary mosque. Located within the parklike *wadi* zone that meanders through the middle of the town, the mosque was designed as "a feast for the eyes," in the words of juror Clive Wilkinson, FAIA.

In Islam in general, and the puristic Saudi version, Wahhabism, in particular, iconography of living things is forbidden in art and architecture. But the human desire for visual interest is constant, so Muslim cultures have developed elaborate geometric patterns that serve, among other things, as architectural ornamentation. In the KAPSARC Community Mosque, this patterning is taken into the computer era. Not only are traditional patterns scaled up and abstracted, but multiple patterns overlay one another and interact with reflective and transparent surfaces in ways never seen in traditional Arab architecture.

Juror Philip Chen, AIA, commented that the mosque complex is "intricate and exquisite, with a single-mindedness of purpose."

Pedestrian path at KAPSARC.

Photo © Alan Karchmer

The intricacy exists on several levels, one of which is the play between almost hyperactive patterning and pure, rectilinear masses. The patterning may be stunning, but it is limited to the mosque and minaret, the two most important structures in the complex. The ancillary buildings at either side (which house men's and women's bathrooms and ablution areas and the imam's office), as well as the reflecting pool, are cleanly minimal and rectilinear, serving appropriately as neutral backdrops. The forecourt and rear court are transitional, both in function and articulation: they have the patterning, but it is purely two-dimensional.

In the bigger picture of the planned community, the mosque complex occupies a shadeless, rectilinear, stone-surfaced precinct set within the shady, organically-curving, landscaped *wadi.* The mosque precinct, naturally, is oriented to Mecca, rather than following the natural lines of the *wadi.* The ancillary buildings serve as walls to separate the mosque from adjacent streets. The reflecting pool and courts transition from the picturesque, green character of the *wadi* park to the more geometric central religious buildings.

The mosque itself consists of four layers, which the architects call "skins." At the outside is a glass and metal "exoskeleton," which is separated from the "structure" (a thick concrete wall) by a wide air space. There is a sound-attenuation layer discreetly added to the inside face of the concrete, then two layers of *mashrabiya,* traditional Arabic screens, at the inside. The pattern of the screens is a classic Arabic configuration, but it is set at an angle, and the outer and inner layers have different colors and scales. Perhaps most impressive of all, the mosque's iconic aesthetic image is the direct result of several of the most important sustainability elements. The outer layers (glass, interstitial air zone, concrete wall) simultaneously create the spectacular visual effects and reduce the air-conditioning loads. It is rare to see such a marriage of luxuriously complicated detailing and serious sustainable design.

Aerial rendering of the KAPSARC master plan. **Photo © Alan Karchmer**

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Past as Prologue

Three Tales of Historic DC Sites

by Mary Jane Bolle

Renovated dome of the Smithsonian Institution Arts & Industries Building.

Arts & Industries Building.

Photo © Maxwell MacKenzie Architectural Photographer

Courtesy of SmithGroupJJR

Historical narratives can serve at least three purposes: establish continuity between past and present; provide a deeper understanding of how we arrived at where we are today; and ignite the imagination. When focusing on restoration and renovation projects, it can be informative to delve into the spirit of the times and the circumstances of the original undertaking. The following three projects are presented as short architectural tales anchored in the past, but informing the present.

Merit Award in Historic Resources

Smithsonian Institution, Arts & Industries Building

Washington, DC

SmithGroupJJR

Associated Architects: Ennead Architects
Structural Engineers: McMullan & Associates, Inc.
MEP Engineers: SmithGroupJJR
Civil Engineers: Wiles Mensch Corporation
Engineering Consultants: The Protection Engineering Group
Technology Consultants: Shen Milsom & Wilke
General Contractor: Grunley Construction Company

The polychrome brick Victorian Arts & Industries (A&I) Building, recently renovated by **SmithGroupJJR** in a joint venture with **Ennead Architects,** was the second building constructed for the Smithsonian Institution, after the museum collection outgrew the Castle building next door. Originally designed to hold a growing number of artifacts, including many from the 1876 Philadelphia World's Fair, A&I became a starter museum for others on the Mall. As collections overflowed their mahogany cases, they were relocated into newly-built structures nearby, including the national museums of Natural History and of History and Technology (the latter now the National Museum of American History).

The A&I Building was designed by Adolf Cluss and Paul Schulze, along with Montgomery C. Meigs. Meigs had envisioned a large square structure with a central rotunda. Cluss and Schulze overlaid Meigs' plan with a Greek cross. This element divided the clerestoried building into symmetrical quadrants and gave birth to four soaring naves that dramatically intersect at the domed rotunda.

The museum opened just in time for President James A. Garfield's inaugural ball in 1881. Festive buntings and some 3,000 gaslights shed a warm glow on the formal gathering, but the scientific display that stole the show would have done the institution's benefactor, James Smithson, proud. On a pedestal in the rotunda stood the Statue of America, holding in her uplifted hand as a symbol of enlightenment not the traditional flaming torch, but the newly invented electric lamp "indicative of skill, genius, progress, and civilization."

Gradually A&I became an office building, and Roman archways high up in the naves were blocked off by infill walls. After a huge 2003 snowstorm collapsed the roofs of two similarly-aged buildings in the area, and an emergency inspection identified its plumbing, electrical, and mechanical systems as "beyond repair," A&I was closed in 2004.

The recent $55 million structural renovation stabilized, protected, and upgraded both the building's façade and its metal and slate roofs. This enabled the building to meet snow, wind, seismic, and blast criteria and readied it for eventual restoration to its original grandeur. The renovation also replaced 900-plus windows. Most received colorless, well-insulated frosted-glass panes. A few tall, narrow, arched windows high on the nave end-walls received replacement colored glass and large letters—N, S, E, or W—to announce the building's four main entrances and indicate the orientation of their exits.

Over the north entrance, façade work included restoration of sculptor Caspar Buberl's signature statue, *Columbia Protecting Science and Industry,* featuring a goddess representing the US and her two maidens. Indoors, the restoration removed the infill walls so that visitors can once again stand on the marble nave floors and peer upward through the high arches to other parts of the building.

With 100% of the exterior and 25% of the interior restored, A&I is open for special events, and awaits further public and private funding to complete the renovation. Meanwhile, observed Smithsonian acting provost Richard Kurin, the building's "unfinished character is one of its charms." Stay tuned.

Restored interior of the Arts & Industries Building.

Photo © Maxwell MacKenzie Architectural Photographer

Master plan for the redesign of Constitution Gardens.

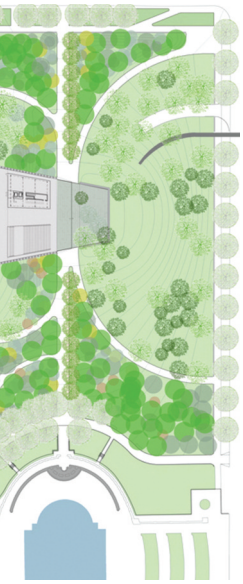
© Rogers Partners

Rendering of the proposed pavilion at Constitution Gardens.

© Rogers Partners + PWP Landscape Architecture

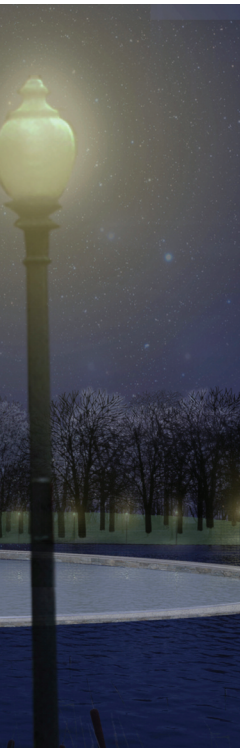
Rendering of the proposed pavilion
and lake/skating rink at Constitution Gardens.

© Rogers Partners + PWP Landscape Architecture



Rendering of the redesigned Constitution Gardens, with the proposed pavilion in the left background.

© Rogers Partners + PWP Landscape Architecture



Award for Excellence in Urban Design/Master Planning

Constitution Gardens

Washington, DC

Rogers Partners

Prime Firm and Landscape Architects: PWP Landscape Architecture
Structural Engineers: BuroHappold Consulting Engineers PC
Civil Engineers: Magnusson Klemencic Associates
Technical Consultants: Thornton Tomasetti

Pierre L'Enfant's master plan for Washington shows only the first half of what is now the National Mall, extending west from the US Capitol to what was then the bank of the Potomac, just south of the President's House. The western part of the future Mall was still underwater at the mouth of Tiber Creek. It emerged in the late 19th century, like Neptune from the sea, when Congress called on the Army Corps of Engineers to dredge a deep channel in the Potomac River for flood control, and deposit the dredged soil to create more land.

It would be nearly a century before landscape architects EDAW and Dan Kiley, working with architects Skidmore, Owings and Merrill, would design Constitution Gardens on that land, and close to half a century more before **Robert Rogers, FAIA**, of **Rogers Partners Architects + Urban Designers,** and **Adam Greenspan,** partner of **PWP Landscape Architecture,** would plan its renovation.

Meanwhile, back in 1918, 30 years after the virgin land was created, but before it could be put to public use, two temporary buildings for the War and Navy departments appeared on it. These rather ramshackle structures ended up remaining there for more than 50 years. Finally, in 1970, long after the stately Lincoln Memorial and reflecting pool mirroring the Washington Monument had sanctified the new land, President Richard M. Nixon reclaimed the adjacent space by ordering the abandoned, crumbling, "temporary" buildings torn down. Constitution Gardens, constructed in their place, was a welcome upgrade. However, technical problems soon appeared. The trees in the forest-garden, planted in sub-standard soil, began to die, and the shallow, concrete-walled pond overheated in summer, nurturing algae and killing the fish.

Ultimately, the restoration team of Rogers and PWP was selected to solve the problems and upgrade Constitution Gardens. The architects view their plan as "respect[ing] and complet[ing]" the legacy of previous designers, while offering a retreat for locals and visitors alike. Their design, to be realized in two phases, would rebuild the lake, enliven the topography, diversify the plantings, add a pavilion, and re-design pathways to enhance connectivity with adjacent memorials.

Phase I, scheduled for 2017, calls for the construction of a new entry plaza and garden wall. It also entails the restoration of the stone lockkeeper's house that formerly stood beside the City Canal, now paved over as Constitution Avenue.

Phase II, expected in the next three to five years, depends on fundraising. It calls for re-engineering the pond as a natural 12-foot-deep flowing lake fed by both rainwater runoff and the Tidal Basin. The water would circulate, as well, through the nearby Reflecting Pool and the World War II Memorial's basin. The pond would have a shallow ring for ice skating in winter and boating in summer. The new two-story pavilion with glass walls would project over the lake and include a restaurant, observation deck, concessions, and National Park Service facilities.

With three of the four neighboring memorials having been built and dedicated since the gardens first opened in 1970, the tenor of Constitutional Gardens has changed over the past 50 years. The new plan, with its array of elements, portends a soothing natural retreat ideal for socialization, solitude, de-stressing, relaxation, meditation, forgetting, or remembering.

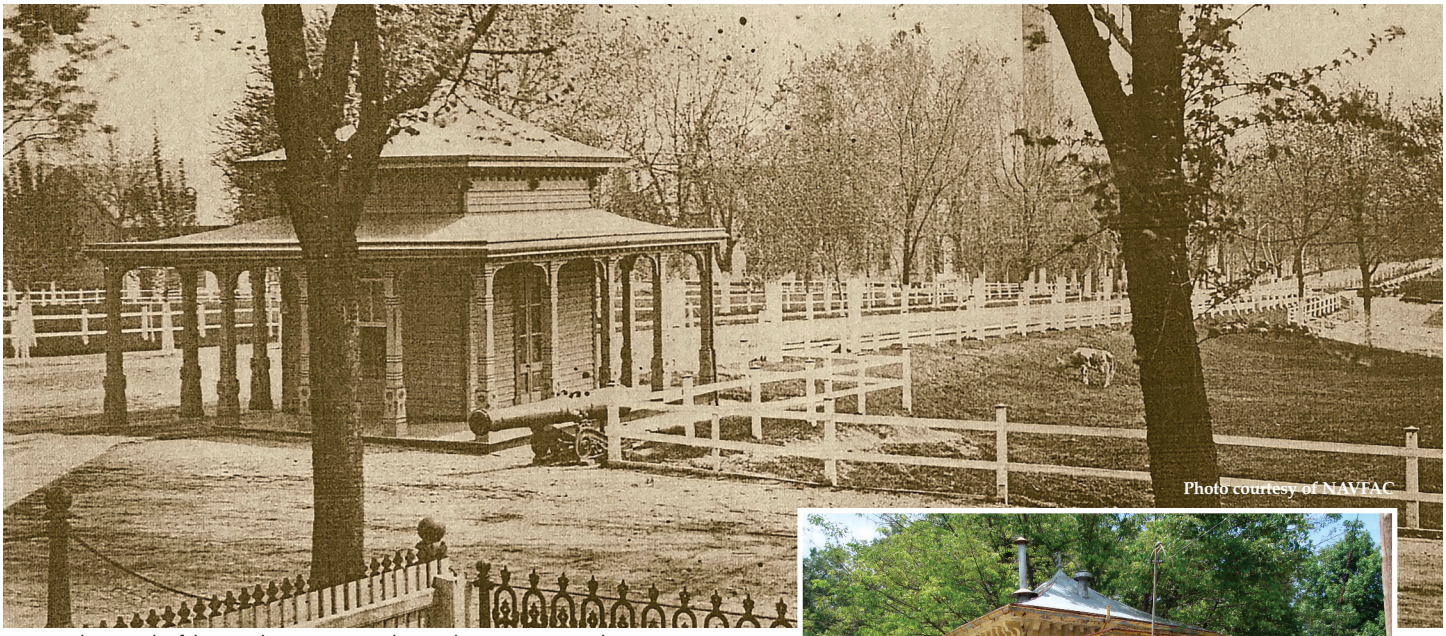


Photo courtesy of NAVFAC

Historic photograph of the Watch Box *in situ* at the Washington Navy Yard.

Award for Excellence in Historic Resources

Historic Watch Box, Washington Navy Yard

Washington, DC

EYP Architecture & Engineering/Summit Construction (Design/Build Team)

Structural/MEP Engineers: EYP Architecture & Engineering
Building Documentation: Arris Architectural Group
Landscape Architects/Civil Engineers: Pennoni Associates
Paint Analysis: Building Conservation Associates
Building Relocation: Ayers House Movers
Marine Construction: W.F. Magann
Roofing Contractor: Wagner Roofing

The story of the little Victorian Watch Box is one of mystery and intrigue, banishment and destruction, and ultimately redemption and restoration by **EYP Architecture & Engineering,** under principal **Matthew S. Chalifoux, AIA.**

It all started in the 1850s when an unknown architect designed at the US Navy Yard in Southeast Washington a minor gatehouse measuring 13 x 13 feet. He selected sturdy boards that tightly overlapped to keep out the rain, snow, heat, and cold. He added a wide wrap-around porch roof to shade gatekeepers in hot summers; a solid brick floor to keep out the damp in winter; and a brightly painted exterior to spread joy. While the Watch Box stood steadfastly at its post from the 1850s to 1909, it saw Washington grow from a sleepy rural capital to a cosmopolitan center.

Then, in 1909, after nearly 60 years of faithful service, the little Watch Box was declared redundant. It was banished to the Naval Support Facility at Indian Head, Maryland, to make way for a new firehouse. There it remained for a century, losing its porch roof and its dignity, and gaining an unsightly addition that ruined its symmetry, until at last, it was abandoned and left to disintegrate in the elements.

The Watch Box at Indian Head before the move. **Photo courtesy of EYP**

This story has a happy ending, however, thanks to the federal government's Historic Preservation Act. The act requires close scrutiny by an appointed committee when any facility granted historic status moves to destroy historic property. This occurred when the Navy Yard requested permission to remove an unused, disintegrating pier. In exchange, the preservation committee accepted the Navy's proposal to reclaim and restore the historic Watch Box as compensation.

EYP was brought in to rescue the fragile wooden box, stabilize it for its long trip home, and ultimately restore it to its previous radiance. After a grueling 30-mile trip back to the Navy Yard by barge and remote-controlled dolly, it was gently off-lifted for restoration. Old photos helped the architects discover its original structural details. Using the photos, the team also produced drawings to re-create a wrap-around porch roof and support columns that are virtually identical to the originals. Through paint analysis the team was able to "scrape" back through 25 distinct layers, to determine the sentinel's original color scheme.

Today, flanked by cannons, the proud, 11-ton Italianate-style "jewel box" stands in its new place of honor across from the Navy Yard's West Leutze Park, where it serves as a backdrop for naval ceremonies, fanfare, and music. Here, more than ever, it exudes the love with which it was created, as visitors dote on it and gather 'round to have their photos taken.

This Historic Watch Box restoration was previously covered in the Fall 2016 issue of ARCHITECTUREDC.

Views of the restored Watch Box, back at the Washington Navy Yard.

Photos © Chris Spielman

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Bar area at ANXO Cidery & Pintxos Bar, with the large oak barrel visible in the right background.

Photo © dim sum media

Setting Examples

Chapter President Recognizes Three Projects

by G. Martin Moeller, Jr., Assoc. AIA

Dining terrace at ANXO Cidery & Pintxos Bar.

Photo © dim sum media

Each year, the AIA | DC chapter president is empowered to present special citations to projects that are exemplary in one of several categories, including Urban Catalyst, Design & Wellbeing, and Sustainable Design. This year's president, Sean Stadler, AIA, chose three projects for recognition.

Presidential Citation for Urban Catalyst

ANXO Cidery & Pintxos Bar

Washington, DC

bestudio

Landscape Architect: Brian Thomas Bolen, PLA
Structural Engineers: Rathgeber/Goss Associates
MEP Engineers: FACE Associates
Civil Engineers: RCFields & Associates, Inc.
Kitchen Consultants and Brand Designers: Basque Bar
General Contractor: Potomac Construction Services

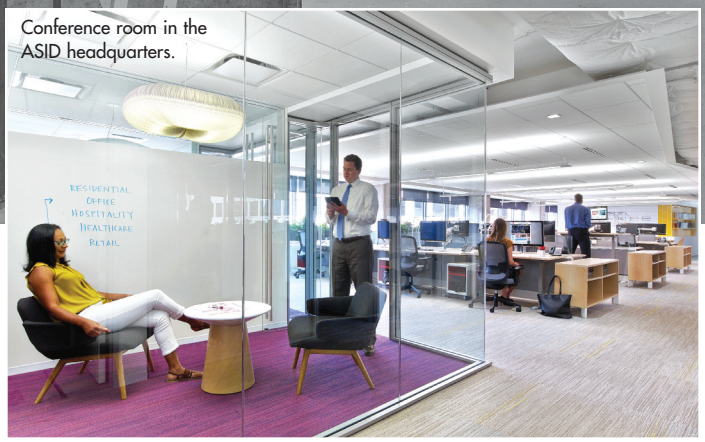
There can be no surer sign of the emerging trendiness of DC's Truxton Circle neighborhood than the recent opening of ANXO, a "cider bar and winery" that also serves *pintxos,* the Basque equivalent of tapas. The popular new restaurant occupies a historic row house that had been vacant for more than four decades until its renovation by **bestudio.** The interior is warm and cozy thanks to its exposed brick walls and wood framing, complemented by quasi-industrial materials such as reclaimed stainless steel wire tubes and corrugated metal. A 660-gallon oaken cask provides a sculptural accent to the entry area and adjacent stairwell.

The project earned a citation as an Urban Catalyst not only for its successful reuse of a formerly derelict building, but also in recognition of its exterior site improvements. While the outdoor dining terrace is a clear neighborhood amenity, less obvious are the landscape's environmental benefits, including reduced storm water run-off and minimized heat island effect. Steel-and-wood trellises provide armatures for climbing vines, while planting beds accommodate on-site apple trees, the fruit of which need travel only a few feet to become cider.

The "Anxo," by the way, is a hairy mythological creature that taught agriculture and iron-making to humans. "Think Basque Big Foot," suggest the architects. Now you know.

Lobby of the ASID headquarters.

Photo © Eric Laignel Photography



Conference room in the ASID headquarters.

Photo © Eric Laignel Photography

Corridor in the ASID headquarters.

Photo © Eric Laignel Photography

Presidential Citation for Design & Wellbeing

American Society of Interior Designers Headquarters

Washington, DC

Perkins+Will

Lighting Consultants: Benya Burnett
Acoustical Consultants: Cerami
MEP Engineers: GHT Limited
Biophilia Consultants: Terrapin Bright Green
Project Managers: Savills Studley
General Contractor: Rand* Construction Corporation

The mission of the American Society of Interior Design (ASID) is, in part, "to demonstrate and celebrate the power of design to positively change people's lives." The organization's new headquarters, by the architecture firm of **Perkins+Will,** is a case study in practicing what one preaches. Based on its careful attention to ergonomics and employee health, the project was awarded a citation for Design & Wellbeing.

Visitors to the office will find an elegantly minimalist space accented by swaths of bright color, jauntily angled walls, and dramatic diagonal slices in the ceiling. They are unlikely to notice, however, the many subtle design moves that make the experience of the space more pleasant over time. The first project anywhere to meet both the Platinum level of certification under LEED for Commercial Interiors and the WELL Building Standard promulgated by the International WELL Building Institute, the ASID headquarters features a circadian lighting system, which mimics the changing quality of sunlight over the course of the day. Automated shades respond to changing weather conditions to keep the interior bright—but not too bright. A "digital dashboard" provides real-time information regarding indoor air quality and ambient sound levels.

As it turns out, even those dynamically angled and diagonal design elements, which might seem to be purely aesthetic gestures, were conceived to reduce stress and foster improved cognitive performance by introducing spatial variety and complexity.

Presidential Citation for Sustainable Design

Roosevelt Senior High School

Washington, DC

Perkins Eastman DC

Structural Engineers: ReStl Designers
MEP and Fire Protection Engineers: Global Engineering Solutions
Civil Engineers/Landscape Architects: AMT
Geotechnical Engineers: Schnabel Engineering
Lighting Designers: MCLA Architectural Lighting Design
Historic Preservation Consultants: EHT Traceries Inc.
Food Service/Kitchen Design Consultants: Nyikos Associates
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Sustainability Consultants: GreenShape
Specifications Consultants: Heller & Metzger
Environmental Consultants: Applied Environmental
Code Review Consultants: Aon Fire Protection Engineering
Hazardous Material Consultants: Apex
General Contractor: Smoot Gilbane II Joint Venture

Main façade of the renovated Theodore Roosevelt Senior High School.

Rainwater harvesting system in a courtyard at the Roosevelt High School.

Photo © Joseph Romeo Photography

Photo © Joseph Romeo Photography

Atrium at Roosevelt High School.

Photo © Joseph Romeo Photography

After-hours community entrance at Roosevelt High School.

Photo © Joseph Romeo Photography

A fine example of the DC Public Schools' ongoing modernization initiative is the recent renovation of the Theodore Roosevelt Senior High School by **Perkins Eastman DC.** Originally built in 1932 in a modest Colonial Revival style, the building suffered from unsympathetic additions and alterations dating to 1977, when ornamental flourishes were removed from the cupola, the main entrance was closed, and courtyards were filled in, impeding access to natural light and air. The latest renovation corrected those errors while inserting a wide array of eco-conscious features that earned the project a citation for Sustainable Design.

The literal centerpiece of the rejuvenated school is a soaring atrium, occupying what was once a disused courtyard. The space is crowned by roughly 10,000 square feet of electrochromic glass, which automatically tints to reduce heat gain and glare on sunny days, yet still allows plenty of light to reach the classrooms lining the atrium's perimeter. A smaller courtyard, enclosed in the 1977 renovation, is now the site of a terraced bio-retention system that captures rainwater—thus reducing the strain on the city's storm sewer system—while providing a welcome green space within the core of the building. Meanwhile, a geothermal heating and cooling system, consisting of some 200 wells drilled to a depth of 500 feet, greatly reduces energy consumption.

With the cupola rehabilitated and lighted at night, the main entrance returned to its original location, and major interior spaces such as a large auditorium restored to their original glory, the Roosevelt school is once again a source of civic pride.

The new headquarters for the American Society of Interior Designers is a living laboratory to study the impact of design. It is the first project in the world to seek both LEED-CI and WELL Building Standard certification at the platinum level.

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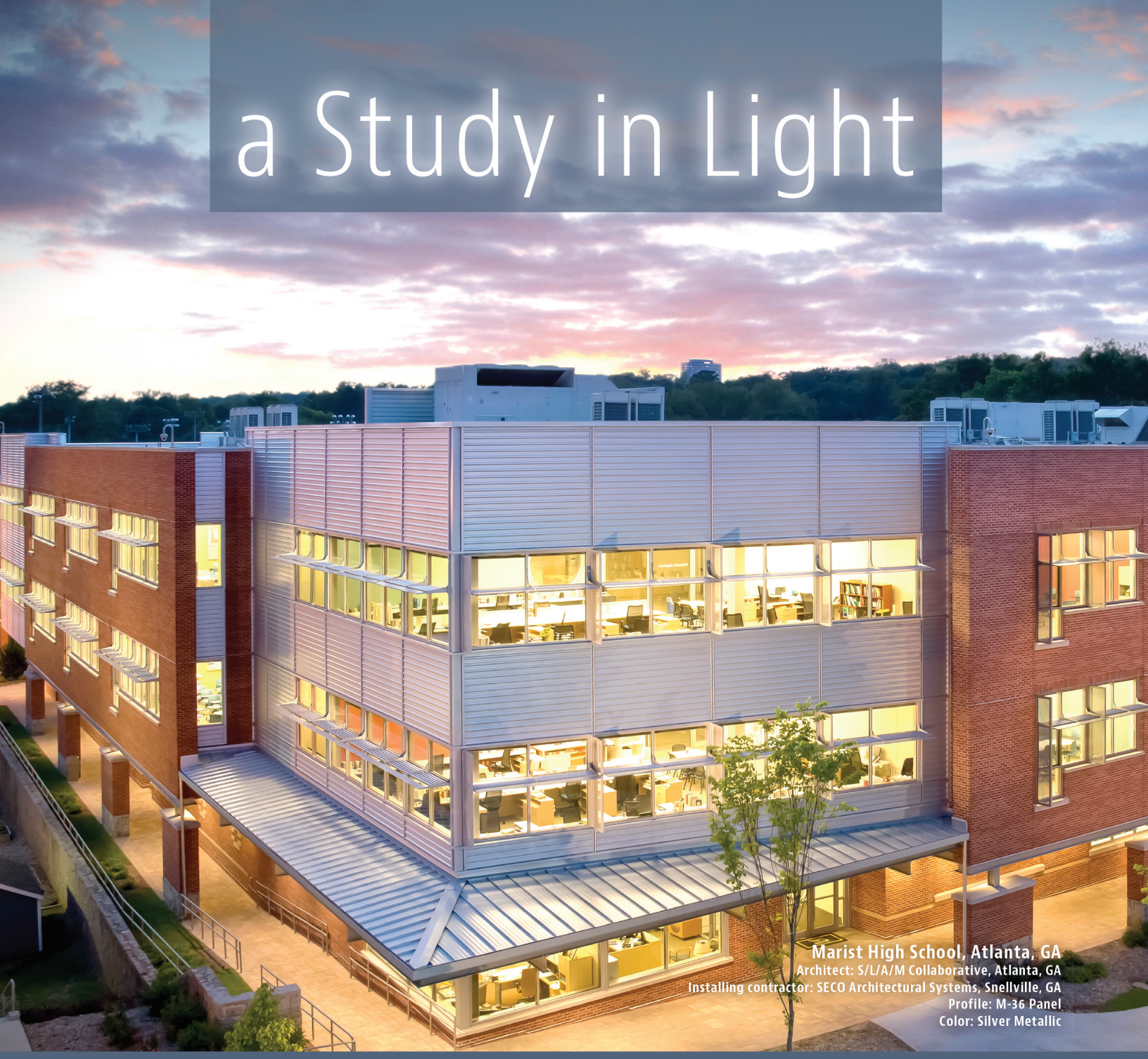
a Study in Light

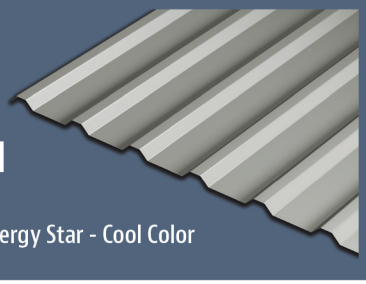


Marist High School, Atlanta, GA
Architect: S/L/A/M Collaborative, Atlanta, GA
Installing contractor: SECO Architectural Systems, Snellville, GA
Profile: M-36 Panel
Color: Silver Metallic

"The M-36 panel is an interesting profile to use on a building like this. It has deep shadow lines that help add lightness and a horizontal feel."

Will Stelten, Architect, S/L/A/M Collaborative

PAC-CLAD M-36 Panel



Silver Metallic - Energy Star - Cool Color

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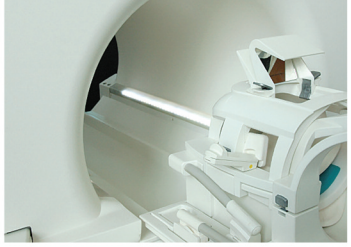

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